



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

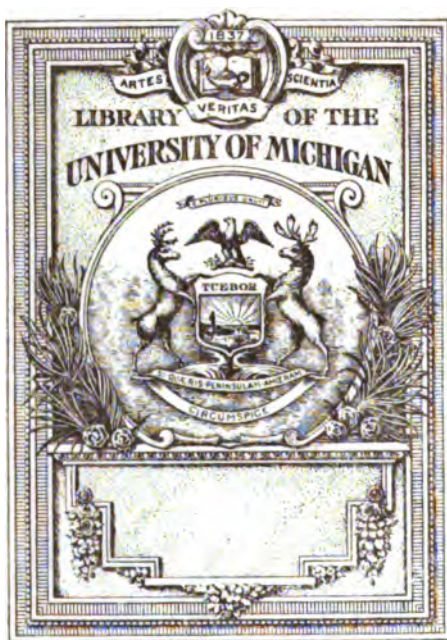
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

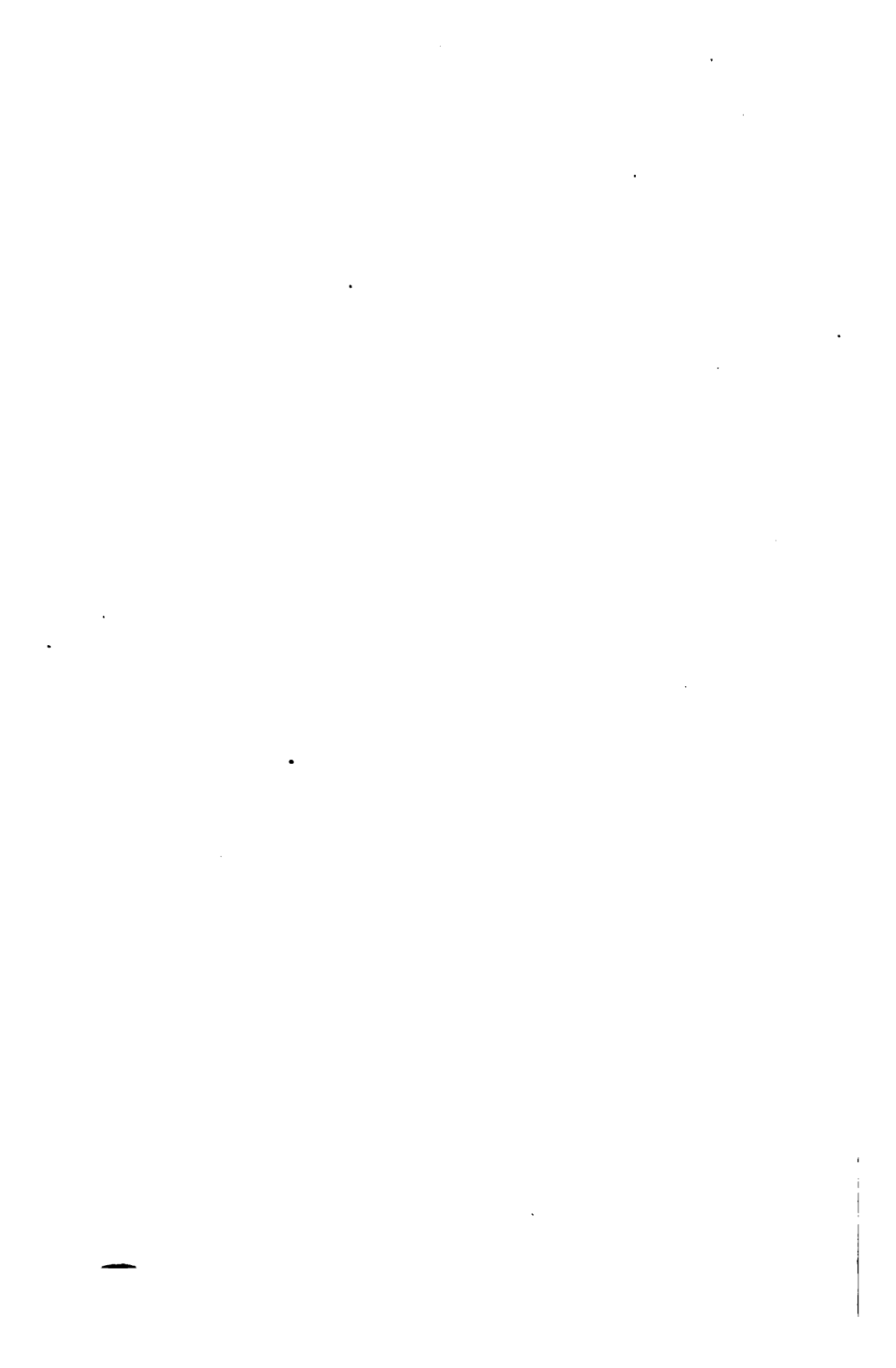
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



AP
4
M84



THE
MONTHLY PACKET

HALF-YEARLY VOLUME

EDITED BY CHRISTABEL R. COLERIDGE

AND

ARTHUR INNES.

NEW SERIES—XVII.

VOLUME XCVII.

PARTS DLXXV. TO DLXXX. JANUARY—JUNE, 1899.

LONDON

A. D. INNES AND COMPANY, LIMITED.

1899



**The Gresham Press,
UNWIN BROTHERS,
WOKING AND LONDON.**

INDEX.

	PAGE
Attic Window, From My. By Annie Groser Hurd.	
	105, 224, 341, 465, 583, 699
Beetles. By G. L. Apperson	666
Celtic Art, Characteristics of. By L. M. McCraith . . .	180
China Cupboard, The	109, 229, 349, 469, 588, 705
Conquest of London, The. By Dorothea Gerard	
	1, 121, 241, 361, 481, 601
English Girl's Life in Penang. By O. M. Kindersley	74
Eye Artist, The. By John Gaunt	416
Fetich Leopards, The. By H. Bindloss	38
Forgotten Queen, A. By M. F. W.	527
Glimpses of Military Life in India. By M. E. Palgrave . . .	50
Hervé, Breton Saint and Singer. By C. M. J.	591
How Moslems Fast. By Lucy M. J. Garnett.	544
Invasion of Poddleby Common, The. By R. Pardepp	64
Lord Muncaster's Gulls. By Janet Sinclair Berger	627
Memorable Meals. By Mrs. Morgan Morgan	297
Monna Befana. By E. C. Vansittart	19
Military Life in India, Glimpses of. By M. E. Palgrave . . .	50
Order of the Garter. By Grace Johnstone	427
Pair of Old Enemies, A. By Helen Ouston	277
Penang, An English Girl's Life in. By O. M. Kindersley . . .	74

Poetry:—

PAGE

The Last Night of Gaius Gracchus.

The Vigil of the Lady of Lingansyde. By Helen Ouston . . 398

Queen's Birthday, The. By Elsa D'Esterre Keeling 156

Rector, Vicar, and Curate 651

Runner, The. By Violet Hobhouse 630

Some Forgotten Books. By E. H. Lacon Watson:—

I. Fuller's 'Worthies' 409

II. The 'Prison Thoughts' of Dr. Dodd 659

Strong God Circumstance, The. By Helen Shipton.

82, 188, 313, 436, 548, 670

Women of Other Nations. By E. March Phillipps:—

I. America 25

II. France 140

III. Germany 258

IV. Italy 384

V. Sweden 508

VI. Spain 619

Wooden Chanticleer, A. 286, 399

65

THE MONTHLY PACKET.

NEW SERIES.

JANUARY, 1899.

THE CONQUEST OF LONDON.

BY DOROTHEA GERARD (MADAME LONGARD DE LONGGARDE),
AUTHOR OF 'A FORGOTTEN SIN,' 'A SPOTLESS REPUTA-
TION,' 'LADY BABY,' ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

'NAPOLEON ON ST. HELENA.'

IT would be untrue to say that Evelyn was enjoying herself less than her sisters, but it was nevertheless true that she was doing so in a different way. For them the present sufficed, whereas to her it was rather an object to an end, than an end in itself. In the midst of its delights she never quite lost sight of the future, and of her determination that, whatever happened, she, for one would never return to the narrow circle from which Uncle Lugdale's legacy had freed her. If it had been nothing else but the attraction of the galleries it would have been enough to make her feel that she could never again bear a complete banishment from London. Not until she found herself surrounded by such treasures of art as she had never hoped to see, and with daily access to the masterpieces of all nations, did she discover how deeply rooted in her nature her artistic cravings were. Not all the glitter of the ballroom, not all the music and the talk and the excitement of constant new faces, could keep those instincts from awakening and demanding their due. It was delightful to dance a night through in a dress designed by herself, and surrounded by the

evidences of that material luxury in which she so revelled, but it was almost equally delightful to wander about the rooms of Burlington House, halting before some favourite picture, and spending a happy hour in discovering new beauties. However late she came home it was rarely that she missed her hour in the atelier of Mr. Whiteson, the distinguished genre painter, who condescended to take pupils at a rate proportionate to his reputation, and where Evelyn wielded her brush with quite as much zest as she had done her feet overnight. It was a double life she led at this time, and corresponding to the double personality of which she—like so many of us—consisted; and not infrequently the ambitious Evelyn and the artistic Evelyn found it somewhat hard to hit it off together. But on the main point they were as yet agreed—the impossibility of returning to Gilham.

‘If only a man with a pot of money would turn up!’ she sometimes sighed to herself. ‘Wouldn’t I just know what to do with it! Better than I ever knew before! They think themselves mightily artistic in the arrangement of their tables and chairs here, but I fancy I could give them a wrinkle or two. How I’d revel in carpets and dados and chimneypieces! And I’d buy up at least seven pictures in the Academy on the spot.’ From which it will be seen that the resolution of taking the first eligible suitor who presented himself still stood upright.

There were moments when she felt almost inclined to be jealous of Adela; not that Lord Maurice Berners appeared to her one whit less plain-faced than he did to her younger sister, but that it seemed probable that Adela was going to have the chance which was denied to her. That Lord Maurice, although a second son, was an extremely desirable husband from a pecuniary point of view, being richly endowed by a grandmother, the Vennings had long ago been informed by sympathising friends; and, although carefully maintaining his attitude of family friend, and as carefully avoiding any approach to sentimentality, it almost seemed as though the young man’s intentions were serious, else why should he have got his limp but good-natured mother to offer her services to the girls? And yet Adela made a face whenever the possibility was suggested to her.

'If you want to know what I think of you,' burst out Evelyn in her blunt manner on one of these occasions, 'then it's just that you're an idiot!'

'Why?' asked the startled Adela.

'Because I do believe that if Lord Maurice proposed to you to-morrow you'd say "No," just because his complexion doesn't suit your taste. Do you think it suits mine any better? And yet, wouldn't I just jump at him if I had the chance!'

'I wish you would!' said Adela, laughing. 'I shouldn't mind him at all as a brother-in-law; but as a husband!' And she gave a delicate little shiver.

'Of course Evelyn only means if she cared for him,' corrected Philippa, whose ideas regarding marriage were far too romantic to be practical.

'I care for his money,' said Evelyn brusquely, 'and as an appendage to that he would be quite bearable.'

But, as has been said before, and despite such declarations as these, her persevering look-out for a rich suitor who was not forthcoming did not interfere with her artistic pursuits. Even the lessons did not suffice her; lately she had taken to copy in the Victoria Gallery. It was one day towards the end of May that she started rather earlier than usual for her destination, anxious to make up for two forenoons that had been lost through stress of social engagements. Her subject was a sunset landscape, in the centre of which a stately English home stood bathed in golden light and shaded by ancestral beeches—such a home as no doubt she had often dreamt of possessing. Nothing that could satisfy the eye either of the artist or the woman of the world was wanting here: the majestic sweep of the avenue, the regal breadth of the terraces, the curiously mullioned windows through which the wealth and comfort of that splendid interior seemed to be overflowing—they all spoke a language explained by the title in the catalogue, for 'A Home of the Rich' was what the artist had chosen to call his composition.

When Evelyn had found her place she was rather annoyed to notice two other copyists, one of either sex, established in close proximity. Having until now been alone in this room their presence appeared almost as an

intrusion. She threw one rapid glance towards them, and observed that they were both young, and that the woman's blue dress was somewhat shiny at the elbows, and then with a passing wonder as to whether they 'belonged together' or not, she settled to her work, and promptly forgot all about her companions.

When she had worked for twenty minutes in a silence that no one had broken, and had begun to feel that the threads dropped three days ago had been successfully picked up, Evelyn, with a deep breath of relief, let her palette sink on to her knee. Now only it occurred to her to feel curious as to the work of her neighbour. It was the male artist who sat nearest to her—so near that by only leaning back in her chair she could get a full view of his canvas. As she did so her eyebrows instinctively contracted. The subject of the copy was one of the thousand which have been painted of the unfortunate prisoner of St. Helena—unfortunate in this also that his name has inspired as many second-rate pictures as lyrics. There he was standing sentinel upon a rock, wrapped apparently in an old dressing-gown that had probably been discarded from normal use because of being at least two inches too short even for *his* figure, and to all appearances meditating suicide. Not much more than the outlines of the copy were on the canvas so far, but they were enough to reveal to Evelyn's sharp eye the quality of the copyist. If the anatomy of the original was at least questionable, that of the facsimile was calculated to raise serious misgivings, and if that perspective was distinctly 'steep' this one promised to be considerably steeper—so steep, in fact, that Evelyn, whose sense of proportion was particularly sensitive, half uttered an exclamation, and then suppressed it, but could not refrain from an uneasy movement. The young man, too engrossed to have observed anything, went on working away serenely at his hero's left leg. Almost impatiently Evelyn resumed her brush, and tried to lose herself in the wonderfully illuminated tracery of the castle terraces, but it was no use—that Napoleonic leg would leave her no peace. Against her positive will she was forced to look again, and this time found so serious an aggravation of the situation, that before she knew what she was about the protest had burst from her lips—

'For goodness' sake take care, or he'll be over the cliff!'

The words pronounced sharply in the dead silence of the vast room produced an almost volcanic effect. The young woman in the blue dress started so violently that she dropped her brush, while the copyist of 'Napoleon on St. Helena' turned his bewildered face to the interlocutor and asked hurriedly—

'Who? What do you mean? Who is going to be over which cliff?'

'Why, the unhappy emperor, of course. Don't you see that he's got nothing under his left foot, and that the rock shelves away in a quite impossible manner? With the ankles you have given him he can't keep his balance for more than a minute at most—and although I've no earthly doubt that he's thinking of jumping over, after all there is history to be considered, you know.'

The young man looked serious for a moment longer, even disconcerted, then, suddenly throwing himself back, burst into a deliciously boyish laugh. In the moment that he turned his face towards her Evelyn had met the clearest and brightest brown eyes that she had ever before seen in any human face and had vaguely noticed that the wavy-brown hair which tumbled on to his forehead was of the same bright tint; also that nose and chin were well moulded and the beardless face as fresh as a girl's.

The reception of the uncalled for criticism was, however, not to be entirely friendly.

'Ralph is acquainted with all the laws of perspective,' remarked the lady alongside in a tone whose stiffness sufficiently showed that the two copyists did 'belong together.' 'If anything disturbs you about the position of the leg it can only be because the shadows are not yet filled in.'

'It is not shadows he wants but bones,' said Evelyn decisively. 'No shadows can ever give him back his balance. You've cheated him of at least two most important bones in his anatomy. Just look at that ankle, don't you see that there's a scoop where there ought to be a bump? Give me your brush a moment, and I'll show you what I mean!'

He gave it her without a protest, and with a few rapid strokes—watched by two pairs of wondering eyes—she

actually succeeded in putting at least a shade of probability into the strictured legs.

'There ! That will save him from immediate death ; but it's only a respite, unless you do something to that rock. Of course it was very rude of me to interfere, but perspective is apt to get on my nerves, and I did feel so sorry for that poor top-heavy little man.'

This time the indignant sister's face half quivered into a smile, though her brows were still carefully drawn together, as though she felt it her duty to remain indignant for at least a little longer. The two faces were very like each other, as Evelyn now perceived ; the sister's being a little older, with the same brown hair and eyes as her brother, only a little duller in tint, the same clear complexion ; with less of freshness. It made Evelyn think of the same picture varnished and unvarnished, for in the one face the brightness was a little awanting, and, very unfairly, it was to the man that it had been given, instead of to the woman. Nature had probably made a mistake at the outset, and had never been able to repair it.

'I suppose I ought to introduce myself,' said the young copyist, his access of hilarity abruptly suppressed by a sudden recollection of social duties. 'My name is Alstone, and this is my sister.'

'All right,' said Evelyn without much interest. She had discovered already that he was a gentleman and she a lady, and the mere name seemed to her of secondary importance. 'I'm called Venning, if you care to know.'

'Oh,' said Miss Alstone, with new vivacity. 'Can you be related to the Mr. Venning who used to exhibit about fifteen years ago ? I never saw any of his pictures, but papa used to say that if only he had more 'push' and better opportunities he ought to have been one of the painters of the age.'

'He was my father,' said Evelyn, flushing with pleasure.'

'Then of course I forgive you everything you said about Ralph's copy. Probably you learnt drawing from your father, which of course would make you critical.'

'Unfortunately I didn't. He died before I could hold a pencil steadily.'

'That is almost like our own case, for we are artist's children too, Miss Venning. Perhaps you have seen some of

papa's works? There are two of them in the National Gallery.'

'I've seen nothing; I have only just begun to see and hear. It is barely two months since we crept out of a wretched country hole to daylight.'

That two artist fathers, of whom one at least had been an admirer of the other, should prove a strong cement to friendship was only natural, and within five minutes more the acquaintance to which Napoleon's leg had served as introduction had made rapid progress. The painter parents proved not to be the only points of mutual sympathy, for soon Evelyn learnt that the Alstones too were motherless and alone, and that, like herself and her sisters until this spring, they lived in extremely straitened circumstances; for although Mr. Alstone had been distinctly more successful pecuniarily than Mr. Venning, he had, as little as he, succeeded in leaving a fortune to his children, perhaps because he had rather too much of that 'push' which Mr. Venning lacked, or rather of the quality of reckless liberality which not infrequently goes along with it.

'We have positively nobody belonging to us,' Miss Alstone was explaining in a few minutes more, 'except a distant relation of my father's who has a small ranch in Canada. He has often wanted us to come over and settle there, and Ralph to look after the farm, but it would be a sin for Ralph to throw himself away in that fashion. With such a talent as his, and his father's footsteps to tread in, he is certain to make his way.'

Evelyn felt serious doubts on this point, but, with an unwilling concession to politeness, refrained from saying so.

'I am two years older than he,' Miss Alstone went on, 'and my idea also was to be an artist, but he has caught me up long ago. I don't myself believe that I shall ever get beyond flowers. When I see what difficulties even Ralph has got with the human figure, it makes me resolve to leave that field to others.'

Evelyn threw a glance towards the 'Basket of Roses' which glared half finished from Miss Alstone's canvas, and decided within herself that she was right in her resolution.

'It is quite evident, however,' Mr. Alstone now took up the thread of conversation, 'that *you* know more about the human figure and rocks and things than I do. If you were kind now you would tell me how *you'd* paint this picture.'

'I wouldn't paint it at all. I frankly admit that I find the copy bad, but that does not mean that I find the original good. Napoleon never would have spent his time making faces at seagulls, and there is no historical justification of that length of cloak—nor is it likely at his age he would have outgrown it.'

Ralph laughed again—that same delicious laugh; for a future light of the Academy he really seemed able to bear a good deal of criticism.

'If you want to know what I would do then, I'll tell you; tear it up and start on something fresh. How you came to pitch on this among so many gems is a mystery to me.'

'I daresay I chose all wrong,' said Ralph almost humbly, 'but I always had a fancy for that French chap and—no, I can't drop him now, the feeling is too hateful. I'll just have to risk it, and go for old Nap again—that is to say if you'll give me a tip now and then, Miss Venning—I quite count upon that.'

'You shall have it,' said Evelyn, more pleased by his determination than vexed by the rejection of her advice. 'I've several more days' work here, and between us I daresay we shall manage to bolster up the emperor.'

And they did manage to do this very fairly, although the 'Home of the Rich' came to be neglected in the process, and the brush was more frequently in Evelyn's hand than in that of Mr. Alstone. And by the time Napoleon stood firmly on both legs Evelyn, somewhat to her surprise, discovered that she had become far more intimate with these two new friends than with any other of her London acquaintances. Soon she had grasped the situation completely, and had come to understand why the possibility of some other profession being more lucrative had not occurred to Ralph. The brown-eyed, open-faced boy with almost a girl's complexion, who looked much more like a budding subaltern or country squire than a follower of art, had fallen a victim to one of those family *idées fixes* which ruin so many careers. The idea of having a son who was not an artist had been too painful to Mr. Alstone senior to be entertained, and had led to parental dreams and distressingly early drawing lessons. Being a wideawake little fellow Ralph had taken to scribbling as readily as he would probably have taken to marbles or bricks, had they been pressed upon him with the same persistency, and had thus for his sins

fostered the fond illusion. After the death of the father, who had not lived long enough to be undeceived of his hopes, the chorus of hopeful prophecy was faithfully kept up by an adoring mother and sister, swelled by the voices of that class of family friend who is always ready to chime in to a hymn of praise, simply because it seems pleasanter to agree than to disagree. It was one of those cases in which no choice is left to the victim, whose opinion no one thinks of asking. The family decree : 'Thou shalt be a mighty artist,' had gone forth. By dint of being told that he had a glorious future before him, Ralph had come almost to believe in it himself, although never quite so firmly as did his sister, on whom, after her mother's death, devolved the chief task of fostering the budding genius, and who acquitted herself of it with a zeal worthy of a better cause. That her belief in her brother was quite real Evelyn had soon seen, and liked her all the better for it, even while finding it impossible to share it. Miss Alstone's own modest attempts at painting seemed to have the object only of keeping more in touch with the interests of the brother to whom she had obviously devoted her life, and perhaps also to furnish the pretext for accompanying him to the galleries and keeping her motherly eye upon him. It might have been thought that Evelyn, who was the first person daring openly to throw doubts on this brother's future—and soon she had arrived at doing this—would have inspired Miss Alstone with abhorrence, but for some contradictory reason this was not the case. Despite some very lively disputes each began to find pleasure in the other's society ; while as for the subject of these differences of opinion, he allowed himself to be fought over with unruffled good humour.

'I always had a kind of dark notion that I wasn't cut out for a painter,' he once confided to his critic. 'But if I ever tried to say so they just shut up my mouth by telling me that my father would turn in his grave if he heard me speak. I've done my level best to come up to what was expected of me, but there *have* been moments when I didn't feel a bit like success. Awfully obliged to you, you know, for opening Lucy's eyes a bit.'

It was hard to resist such frank unaffectedness ; and, despite the artistic wrath awakened by bad perspective, Evelyn had from the first felt a distinct liking for the man whose works she had so mercilessly condemned. So much was she pleased

with her new acquaintances that barely a week after the first meeting she had brought them home to tea, for the purpose of showing them off.

Their reception in Arthur Street was all she could desire ; the brown-eyed, light-hearted youth and the motherly, already careworn sister, had immediately found their way into the sisters' sympathies. The distant and indirect link between the two artist fathers had been enough to make Philippa press them warmly to come again. But they did not come again, not because the attraction had not been mutual, but because in the luxuriously furnished room Lucy had felt too painfully conscious of her old blue dress. In this life of gay movement and social enjoyment brother and sister had both felt that they had no place. One visit paid by Philippa in return for that of Miss Alstone appeared to be the close of the incident for all except Evelyn ; and so busy was Philippa in enjoying herself that the cessation of the intercourse scarcely even struck her as strange. The very look of the room in which she had found brother and sister, hung with those juvenile attempts which had inspired such delusive hopes, and furnished with chairs whose threadbare appearance carried her thoughts back to Gilham, had been explanation enough. Except for an occasional remark of Evelyn's, who was still copying in the same gallery, Philippa, after that visit, lost sight of the Alstones, and soon she forgot even to inquire of her sister whether she had again met 'those nice young painter people?' The ever-increasing pace of the season left her no time for such thoughts.

Evelyn's thirst for pleasure seemed, on the contrary, to have lost somewhat of its edge, while her artistic ardour showed a proportionate increase, without, however, bringing to her that serenity of temper which she had always lacked. A double existence is a fatiguing one to lead, and under the undue tax thus laid on her nerves it was perhaps no wonder if her chronic irritation showed at this time some signs of aggravation.

CHAPTER IX.

SNOWDROPS AND WILD ROSES.

WHATEVER may have happened to Evelyn, it is certain that at this time both Philippa and Adela were still heart-whole. No one could be more surprised at this than Philippa herself,

inasmuch as she found time to reflect upon the subject. Among the hundred or so of faultlessly turned-out men by whom she had been taken in to dinner, or entertained at routs, of whom many were agreeable and more still good-looking, was it not strange that not one had left more than a merely passing impression? Among the many young and well-shaped and strong arms that had been laid round her waist to the sound of a waltz, how was it that there was not even one whose touch had ever so faintly thrilled her heart?’

‘Perhaps I’ve got no heart to thrill,’ reflected Philippa in one of her rare moments of mental leisure. ‘I certainly never imagined that I should find all these Irresistibles so perfectly resistible. But perhaps it’s all the better; it will save me, at least, from doing anything foolish; and I’m pretty sure that if I ever did fall in love I should be foolish about it. All these men—no, not *all*, but a good lot of them—are very nice to sit near at dinner, but when I think of sitting near them through life—why, I should just have to jump up and run away. And as for honouring and obeying—I can’t even distantly imagine myself doing that, especially the latter. They can all smile and make small talk, and some of them can tell anecdotes most killingly, but I haven’t seen one who could make me do what *he* wanted, instead of what *I* wanted; and I do think that’s the only sort of husband that I could think of knocking under to. I wonder if he exists?’

It almost seemed that he did not. And yet, about the middle of June, not long after these reflections had been made, Philippa passed through a short experience—an experience of a few minutes only—which for the time made her think that perhaps after all she was not quite so callous as she had supposed herself. It was one of those incidents which seem destined to remain an incident, which nothing has led up to, and on which, apparently, nothing follows.

It was within the walls of Buckingham Palace that this new experience came to Philippa, for about this time the Marchioness of Milford—egged on, no doubt, by her pet boy, to whom it was too hard to the somewhat flabby old lady to refuse anything—had offered to present the sisters. The chance, of course, was too good to be wasted, but it ended by the Marchioness having only two *débutantes* to chaperone. Cissy was obviously too young, and Evelyn, after a little hesitation, had declared that she did not want to be presented.

'You, Evelyn !' said Philippa, almost aghast. 'You to miss such an opportunity as this ! I thought you never meant to miss anything ? And remember that this time the *Lady's Star* will just *have* to mention us, whether it wants or not.'

'I know,' said Evelyn crossly. 'But I'm just not going ; I've got no time, and that's all.'

This was passing strange ; but it was known of old that to try and move a resolution of Evelyn's, whether reasonable or unreasonable, was a mere waste of time, and therefore she was left alone.

'Well, you *may* consider yourselves lucky,' said Maggie Wheeler enviously, when she heard the news. 'To be presented by the Marchioness will send you up a hundred per cent. at least in public estimation. It makes such a difference you know *whom* you are presented by.'

Maggie said this with an accent meant to imply that she knew all about it, although reasons that were both social and financial had kept her from ever making a curtsey to her sovereign.

'You've just come in time to give us your advice about the dresses. By the by, what colour were you presented in ?' asked Cissy flippantly, '*couleur de rose*, I suppose, since that is the colour of your usual humour, and Aggie would go in black of course, with weeping willows to match her eyes.'

Maggie laughed immoderately at the idea, which also helped her to cover the situation.

'Oh, *débutantes* almost always wear white,' she noisily explained, and plunged into a voluble discussion of trains and plumes, to which Cissy listened with a somewhat incredulous smile. The Wheelers, who in the atmosphere of Gilham had seemed to the sisters the very embodiment of fashion and wealth, had gone down considerably in their estimation since being seen among London surroundings. That they themselves were aware of this was clearly to be seen by the altered, almost deprecating attitude towards the girls whom formerly they had somewhat loftily patronised. The uncomfortable consciousness of having been 'found out' evidently oppressed them, but could not prevent them making the most of the situation and of the altered mutual positions. This very day had been the one chosen for making the first move in a new direction, and, to say the truth, Maggie was not over-pleased with the news which had met her at the threshold. A double

presentation meant a lot of money to be spent, and it would have suited Maggie better if her friends had had no extra expenses just at this juncture, but since they were so rich it couldn't really matter, and at any rate she must risk it, and accordingly no sooner had she contrived to be alone with Cissy than the 'Allegro' rôle was abruptly dropped, and, bursting into tears as elaborately as Aggie could have done, the youngest Miss Wheeler confided to her dearest Cissy 'that she was in just an awful fix,' from which she scarcely dared to ask her friend to extricate her; but having no one else in whom she ventured to confide she felt irresistibly pressed to pour out her grief. This grief, according to Maggie's account, was a dressmaker's bill, contracted in secret, and which she dared not reveal to her mother, for fear of being at once banished from town in disgrace.

'A big bill?' asked Cissy, a good deal flattered by the confidence.

'Very big—about eighty pounds,' murmured Maggie, carefully watching the other's face.

'That is not so awfully much,' decided Cissy, whose ideas regarding money had been too thoroughly upset lately to have yet recovered their balance.

'Well, to say the *whole* truth, it is nearer a hundred pounds than eighty.'

'Then—well, I shall speak to Philippa about it.'

'And you think it possible that?—'

'Yes, I don't see why there should be any great difficulty about our lending it to you, and of course you will pay us back in time, say in the autumn, when you can make your confession without any danger of losing a bit of the season.'

Maggie's arms were round her neck before she had done speaking.

'Oh, how good of you! I scarcely dared to hope—and of course I would not take it if I did not know that to you such a sum is a mere trifle.'

Cissy did not quite follow the last remark, having long ago forgotten her reckless hints regarding the inheritance made, but she had tasted a new charm of money, that of being able to stretch a helping hand to a friend, and half out of vanity, half out of real pity—for the idea of being sent out of town *now* appealed to her inmost sympathies—she resolved to let her have the loan.

Neither was there any serious opposition to encounter on Philippa's side.

'It is true that this is rather a bad moment,' she began by saying, 'for I suppose the Court dresses will cost a good deal ; I really must go into our accounts some day soon and see exactly how we stand, but in the meantime, of course, Maggie must have the money. We must not forget what we owe the Wheelers, and it is just as well we should have an opportunity of paying off our debt of gratitude.'

It did not occur to either Philippa or Cissy to wonder how Maggie had managed to contract so large a dressmaker's bill behind her mother's back ; in London, somehow, everything seemed possible. And next day already Maggie gleefully brought home the cheque to Mrs. Wheeler, who blessed the day when she had first befriended the Vennings, and immediately payed off the upholsterer and the coalman, whose long-suffering had lately shown signs of collapse, as well as the arrears of servants' wages.

Meanwhile Philippa, intent on planning court-robcs and practising her curtsy, had not yet found time to undertake that projected revision of accounts. Neither had prudence gone the length of very carefully weighing the expense of their robes. It was clear, surely, that such an opportunity of showing off Adela must be made the fullest use of. And it was, so far as white tulle and satin and feather trimmings and showers of snowdrops could assist in the work. Evelyn it was who had decreed the snowdrops, and who likewise had elected to wreath Philippa's dress with straggling sprays of wild roses, insisting that there was something 'prickly' about her elder sister's personality which nothing but these thorny rose-branches could express.

As for the Drawing Room itself, with its bewilderingly splendid crowd, its mental emotions and physical fatigues, its long hours of waiting and short moment of actuality, it had about it something of a gorgeous nightmare, from which towards four in the afternoon Philippa found herself emerging almost dizzy with hunger, and painfully oppressed by the heat, for the day was the first really hot one of the season. It was at one of the entrances and at the heart of an elegant but not the less jostling crowd that, recovering her presence of mind, she began to look about for her sister. There she was, close at hand, struggling with her train, pushed about by

people who for the moment had forgotten that they were ladies of fashion, and whose sole idea was to reach their carriages—and white as the snowdrops on her gown.

‘Are you ill, Adela?’ asked the elder sister in alarm, and instinctively putting out her one unembarrassed arm. It was nervously clutched by Adela’s white-gloved fingers.

‘I—I don’t feel quite well,’ murmured Adela, trying bravely to smile, though her lips were losing colour. ‘I don’t think I can stand much longer.’

‘Well, there isn’t much room to fall *here*,’ thought Philippa as she put her arm round her sister and looked desperately about for the Marchioness. But the good Marchioness had never been made for resistance. The herd of dowagers, made wild by hunger and the pressure of their satin shoes, the troop of nervously impatient *débutantes* had easily swept the large but yielding old lady to one side.

Philippa and her sister were on the pavement already, in the full glare of daylight with the clatter of restless hoofs in their ears, with an army of footmen on one side, craning their necks for their mistresses, and of lookers-on on the other, eagerly scanning each new apparition.

‘She is going to faint!’

Philippa did not know that she had said it aloud until she saw several heads turned sharply towards her—only for a moment though; a girl overcome by the heat was too common an incident to check the stampede.

‘Oh, what shall I do?’ she said, still speaking to deaf ears, as she thought, and struggling to keep her own footing as well as her sister’s.

‘Give her to me,’ said a new voice close at hand, and just as Philippa was thinking that if Adela got only a little heavier upon her arm she would not be able to hold her up any longer, she felt herself gently put to one side, and quietly but firmly relieved of her burden. A man, stepping out from the crowd of lookers-on on the pavement, had pushed his way through the mob of women, barely in time to come to her assistance.

‘Room, if you please!’ he said in a tone of such thrilling command that it dominated even the chattering and wailing of the female crowd, which fell back instinctively in a short movement of astonishment, and lifting the almost unconscious Adela in his arms as easily as though she had been a

child, he forced his way back into the vestibule, in the very teeth of the dowagers.

'She will open her eyes in a minute,' he said, as he laid her down on a seat as carefully as a woman could have done. 'No, do not touch her now,' as Philippa instinctively endeavoured to prop up her sister's head. 'That is not the way to bring her round quicker. Stay here while I fetch some water, but remember not to raise her head, she is to lie quite flat—see only that she does not slip down.'

He was gone again as rapidly as he had come, leaving Philippa standing beside her fainting sister, whose white train lay heaped on the floor, and whose head had sunk a little to one side, like a snowdrop indeed, drooping in the summer heat. Philippa had never heard that it was bad to raise a fainting person's head; it somehow seemed unnatural and unkind, and she even disbelieved it. And yet, while chafing against the stranger's command, for some reason not explicable to herself she obeyed it, and was presently rewarded by seeing Adela's eyelids quiver and slowly open. By the time their unknown helper returned with the water she had, with her sister's help, struggled into a sitting position.

'A handkerchief, please,' he said, having first made her drink a few mouthfuls; and dipping Philippa's handkerchief in the water he began to moisten the temples of the patient with the most business-like air in the world.

'He must be a doctor,' thought Philippa as she watched him. Now that she had leisure to look at him she felt certain that she had never met him before in any drawing-room; he was not the sort of man whom you could be in the same room with without observing. His age would have been hard to define, for although his dark brown hair was faintly sprinkled with grey, there was about his tall and somewhat spare figure an elasticity that was distinctly youthful. 'He might be either a little under or a little over forty,' Philippa finally decided. She also decided that he did not look like an Englishman, why exactly she could not have said, perhaps because of the marked profile, or of the short, dark-brown beard that was sharp and clean-cut as a dagger, or of something particularly piercing in the black eyes. For the first time she understood what poets meant when they talked of

an 'eagle gaze.' But for a general sallowness of complexion—which also was un-English—this stranger with the high, wide forehead could not have helped being even strikingly handsome. 'He must be a foreigner,' thought Philippa. 'Perhaps he is a member of one of the Embassies, but then he can't be a doctor, after all.' And she wondered whether she had guessed right, and then fell to wondering why she should wonder at all, since this man was a stranger, and in all probability would remain so. Her eyes fell on the fingers that were still busy with Adela, and her perplexity increased. He could not belong to an Embassy, after all; those were not the carefully tended hands of a diplomat—not the hands of a 'fine gentleman' in any sense of the words. Those fingers looked as though they had been used to wield much ruder instruments than a pen; that roughened skin, those flattened nails had assuredly never been pampered by either a French or an Austrian valet. It was difficult to accord their look with the quiet assurance that was expressed by every movement of the figure.

Even after the crowd had partly disappeared, and the unknown man, having seemingly taken charge of the situation, had discovered the Marchioness and procured the carriage, Philippa's thoughts remained occupied in a way that she had never known before.

'I fancy that sort of man could get himself obeyed by most people,' she mused as she leant back wearily in a corner of the carriage. 'Any way he knows how to order one about.' And then she remembered that he had left them without introducing himself—another thing which marked him as being not a man of the world, and which corresponded perfectly to the fingers.

During the first weeks that followed on the Drawing Room Philippa fell into the habit, on entering a room, of scanning the men present with a slight, a very slight thrill of expectation, and when she asked herself whom she was looking for, she never failed to see before her mind's eye the piercing black eyes and dagger-shaped beard of the stranger of Buckingham Palace. But in the flesh she did not see him again, not in any ballroom, nor at any dinner-table; and gradually curiosity was starved out for want of fulfilment, and soon she forgot to look out for the so marked profile, and to laugh at herself inwardly for this rather romantic interest in a personage who

seemed only to have walked across her stage, leaving no clue behind him.

In these days it was that one of the faithful Fanny's periodical reports arrived from Gilham, in which it was stated that the house was in 'odder and the dawgs in good hailth and dradeful at the cats, and the roses is out in the gairden, and Master Spangles he's killed two kittens yaisterday and the windars is all been haired.'

The formula varied but slightly from week to week, but this time, quite exceptionally, a P. S. had been added—

'Miss Grey she told me in church yesterday,' and the "newt" here informed her mistresses that the 'Big Ouse is been bought by a gentlemen from Africky as has so much money all digged up by himself that they do say the wolls of the rooms is to be lined with golding paper.'

'From Africa?' ejaculated Philippa, who had read the missive aloud. 'She doesn't mean a nigger, surely? Just fancy a nigger at Swanmere!'

'He's got my leave to be there,' said Evelyn, 'since I shall never have to see him.'

'Mine too!' declared Cissy. 'Just fancy what a fever this would have put us into a few months ago! A family at Swanmere! But what is Swanmere to us now, or Gilham, or anything up there?'

'And I don't think we lose much either,' observed Philippa as she refolded the paper. 'Probably it is one of those new African millionaires who have made their fortune in gold-mines, so it would only be a parvenu family, after all, that we would have had for neighbours—a vulgar, bumptious wife probably, with vulgar, bumptious daughters.'

(To be continued.)

MONNA BEFANA.

'What can I give Him,
 Poor as I am?
 If I were a shepherd
 I would bring a lamb;
 If I were a wise man
 I would do my part;
 Yet what can I give Him?—
 Give my heart.'—*Christina Rossetti.*

WE talk of Twelfth Night—Old Christmas Day—and Epiphany, but how many of us remember that the original meaning of this last word is 'apparition' or 'manifestation,' referring to the visit paid by the Wise Men from the East to the manger bed at Bethlehem?

Doubtless the habit of giving children gifts on this day is typical of the offerings presented by the Three Kings to the Divine Child. This so-called 'Adoration of the Magi' has from earliest times afforded a favourite subject for painters and sculptors. In a Syriac Code of the sixth century is an effigy of the Child lying in swaddling clothes in an oblong chest; and in an Arabic Code, written on dimity paper in 1299, preserved in Florence, Jesus is represented as lying in the manger, which is shaped like an ark, behind which stand an ox or an ass.

In those countries where miniature representations of the manger are set up in churches and also in private homes, it is customary to remove them on this day, or alter them so as to represent the visit of the Eastern magnates: these Wise Men—learned in astronomical signs and portents—as we all know, on beholding a strange star in the east, set out on a long and toilsome journey to Bethlehem; tradition describes them as having been: Gasper, a ruddy youth; Melchior, a white-haired old man, and Balthasar, of dark complexion; their kingly robes stand out strikingly among the humble figures of the lowly shepherds in homespun and goat-skins.

An annual fair takes place in Rome on the eve of the Epiphany ; up to twenty years ago it was held in the heart of the town in the Piazza dei Caprettari, and the narrow, tortuous streets branching like the spokes of a wheel from the Piazza S. Eustachio. Traffic was suspended for the time being, and every inch of space occupied by booths and stalls of varying size and shape ; there were large, well-stocked stalls almost like little huts ; other vendors, not able to afford the luxury of a booth, merely spread out their wares on small tables covered with white, green, pink, red, or blue paper cut out in patterns. Stalls and tables alike were laden with every kind of ware, from historical gilt nuts to silver candlesticks, from roughly painted terra-cotta hunchbacks containing a whistle to delicately embroidered handkerchiefs ; all tastes, all purses could be satisfied here, and the gains of the merchants were considerable. In those days the Befana fair was really a gorgeous sight ; business was real in the narrow streets crammed with a noisy crowd illuminated by the red glow of flaming torches attached in every possible way to the booths, where presided large and small figures representing Monna Befana.

Since then vain efforts have been made to import the Christmas-tree into Italy from lands beyond the Alps, but it has not become a popular custom, and has remained confined to a few houses among the upper class ; following the French habit, the custom of dispensing gifts on New Year's Day was next introduced, but this also met with scant success, and the Festa della Befana, that peculiar feast so full of mysterious joy to children's hearts, eagerly looked forward to by young and old, rich and poor, has continued to hold its own. For, here, it is not Christmas the little ones long for with trembling hope and fear, their great day is the Feast of the Epiphany, which in southern lands replaces the gift-giving of Christmas. They firmly believe in Monna Befana, who comes down the chimney on the eve of Twelfth Night, bringing toys and rewards to good, obedient children ; tall and dark, wrinkled and shrivelled, dressed in silk and brocade, wearing an enormous cap low over her piercing eyes, Monna Befana comes from a long, long way off, across snow-covered mountains and stormy seas, laden with huge parcels and bundles. She is accompanied by a number of mischievous little servants called Befanini, whose business it is to look after her luggage during the journey, and on arriving in the towns to visit each house

where children live, and find out what their conduct during the past year has been. It is strange how good and quiet the children always grow shortly before the Befana! A week previous they set to work writing letters to Monna Befana, mentioning their wishes as regards presents. How they do rack their brains under their curly heads, and how fast little hearts beat with anticipation! 'What shall I write? What shall I say? What shall I ask my Befanino to bring me?' Such are the questions which besiege every mother's ear. At last the letters are carefully and laboriously compiled, and on the eve of the Befana are placed under the hood of the chimney, from which smoky post-box the Befanini transmit them, with words of recommendation, or the contrary (according to the information they have obtained) to Monna Befana. How eloquent are the innocent desires scrawled across these white pages! Sometimes in order to render them more forcible, drawings of the coveted toys are added below: horses with long, long bodies, prehistoric heads, and brushlike tails; dolls, rigid and stiff like mummies; guns of new invention; swords *à la* Abd-el-Kader—extraordinary samples of art! At midnight the Befanino comes down the black chimney, and deposits the longed for gifts on the heartstone, while Monna Befana careers along the roofs of the opposite houses. Tender consciences speak loudly on this night, as past shortcomings, acts of disobedience, untruthfulness, and manifold failings rush across the mind in a flood, bringing a hidden fear lest the offence should be deemed too heinous to be condoned, and the culprit punished by receiving nothing but a bag of ashes! As a rule, however, Monna Befana is wonderfully forgiving, or perhaps the Befanino has put in a good word, for when—in the dawn of the cold winter's morning—barefooted figures rush to the chimney where their letters were deposited over night, each one generally finds his or her heart's desire fulfilled, and since nothing so spurs and helps us towards goodness as to be thought better than we are, or to be treated more generously than we deserve, the result of Monna Befana's forbearance is to call forth regret for past offences, and earnest resolves to do better during the opening year. Another peculiarity of Befana's is the extraordinary way in which she always manages to procure the exact gift each one covets; there is something decidedly uncanny about this, for the identical doll with fair hair and blue eyes which Marietta

has wistfully contemplated for weeks past through the plate-glass windows of the famous toyshop in the Corso greets her on Epiphany morning ; the one box of English soldiers—so much smarter in their red coats than the familiar Italian ones—that Peppino had set his affections upon, and which, to his distress, had disappeared from the shop windows a few days earlier, meets his delighted eyes on the great day. All is sunshine, brightness, and rejoicing on the Befana ; on all sides are to be heard sounds of tin trumpets, miniature guns being fired, dolls squeaking to the accompaniment of glad cries and shouts of rippling laughter.

The Epiphany used to be specially celebrated at the Vatican where the Pope and Sacred College exchanged gifts. After the service in the Basilica, the Pope was carried triumphantly on his throne, surrounded by the famous waving white feather fans, into a hall of the Vatican, where all the pontifical court and Roman princes were collected, resplendent in magnificent robes and jewels. The oldest member of the Sacred College then read aloud a Latin allocution, while a Cardinal presented the Pontiff with a golden goblet containing a hundred ducats, and the bells overhead burst into a joy-peal. All these ceremonies were lost in the mists of time, but the Befana fair survives to the present day, though it has become more civilised—so to speak—and lost much of its artistic and original character. The quarter of S. Eustachio now remains silent and deserted, but in the Piazza Navona close by booths and stalls are still erected on the eve of Epiphany, and largely frequented by the lower classes ; the upper ones, however, prefer the smart shops in the Corso, where a very children's paradise of toys and playthings exists in many a plate-glass window.

On the eve of the Epiphany, after sundown, in the provinces of Istria and Friuli, the *contadini* (peasants) march in procession to an open space in the fields, where stands a pile of wood prepared beforehand for the purpose ; the children come first, dancing and singing, then the young men followed by the older members of the community, the head shepherd bringing up the rear, and sometimes the parish priest assists at the ceremony, when held on the property of the wealthiest land-owner of the district. Men and women now stand round the pile, to which the head shepherd sets fire with a handful of straw ; the dry canes of the Indian corn crackle gaily, quickly

igniting the faggots, and in a short time the flame rises high, burning brightly and illuminating the snow-covered fields around with ruddy glow. Then the boys dance round and round the fire, beating copper pans and kettles, and shouting at the top of their voices, '*Venga, venga pan e vin, E salsiccie nel catin*' ('Come, bread and wine, And sausages in the cellar'). The older men, meanwhile, anxiously look to see from which side the smoke rises, and hence forecast the harvest. Should the wind blow from the sea—that is, from south—it is good sign; woe, should it come from the north, for then the summer storms from that direction will be the worst. Afterwards all assemble indoors, and feast off cakes by the fireside. These fires in the native Friulian dialect go by the name of *pagnarili*, and seem to be a survival of the annual sacrifice pagans were wont to make to Ceres.

In the neighbourhood of Cremona, on the same evening, girls are in the habit of taking three dried beans: one of these is divided in half, the second notched, the third left whole; having wrapped up each one separately in a piece of paper, the girl shuffles them in her hands or in a cup, and on going to bed places them under her pillow. The next morning on waking she draws out one and unfolds the paper; the split bean signifies a poor, the notched bean a well-to-do, and the whole bean a rich marriage. Probably this custom is analogous to the French one of a bean, a ring, and a coin being baked in the traditional Twelfth Night cake.

Another duty is laid on Monna Befana at Anversa in the Abruzzi, for there the women all tie a kerchief across their foreheads before going to bed, and recite, in addition to the usual 'Ave' and 'Paternoster,' the following rhyme:—

'Pasqua Pifania, Pifanegna,
N testa me l' attacco la cegna,
Chi me vo' bene, chi me vo' male
N sogno stanotte me vegna a trovare.'

'Feast of Epiphany, Epiphany feast.
I bind my head with my scarf,
Who wishes me good, who wishes me ill,
May he come to see me in my dreams to-night,'

firmly believing that during the night their dreams will reveal to them who are the true friends, who the enemies in disguise.

In Sardinia, at a place called Sorso, the day is marked by a

curious custom, for the whole population anxiously awaits the arrival of the Magi, who are supposed to pass through the village on their journey to salute the Child Jesus in the manger. Towards 4 p.m., three men, attired like kings, appear on horse-back, preceded by *sos assistentes* (three men on foot who represent their servants). Drawing up before a house at random, *sos assistentes* intone a song to a monotonous tune, at the end of which the three kings dismount and knock at the door; this is promptly opened, and they are invited to enter and partake of the '*grazie benedette*,' which consist of dried figs, oranges, fritters, and wine; then—restored and refreshed from the fatigues of their journey—they continue to sing as they depart, and proceed on their way.

In Sardinia the Epiphany goes by the name of *Paschinunti* (*Pasqua' d'annunzi*) of announcements, because on that day the priest, from his pulpit, announces the dates of the movable feasts which occur during the year. Concerning this festival a popular Sardinian proverb says: '*Paschinunti, Paschinuntada ne' lettù fattu, ne domo mandada*' ('On the feast of the announcement neither bed is made, nor house swept'), to signify that the worthy country folk keep the Epiphany as a holy day, abstaining from all manual labour. A special kind of bread, called *sa giuada*, is baked for this feast; it is a large round cake, not unlike oatmeal cake, twenty inches in diameter and four thick.

The Sardinians recognise four *Pasque* in the year: *Pasca nadale* (Christmas); *Paschinunti* (the Epiphany); *Pasca manna* (Easter); and *Pasca di fiore* (Pentecost); but of all these none is celebrated so joyously as the Feast of Manifestation, on which the Three Kings, guided by a star, journeyed to far-off Bethlehem, there to lay their royal gifts at the lowly shrine of the King of kings whose earthly cradle was a manger.

E. C. VANSITTART.

WOMEN OF OTHER NATIONS.

I.—THE AMERICAN.

THE majority of English women have little exact knowledge of their sisters in alien lands. Unless some special reason has led to the study of the character and circumstances of the women of any one country, that knowledge is often little more than a superficial impression, gathered we hardly know how, that Americans are independent, that French women are frivolous, and that the German is a good *hausfrau*.

Next summer the International Conference of Women Workers is to be held in London, under the presidency of Lady Aberdeen; hundreds of women, distinguished in their own lands for thought and cultivation and devoted work, will be gathered together, and we shall certainly follow their discussions more intelligently if we know something of the social and educational and professional aspects of the lives they live at home.

In turning, first of all, to those women who are of our own blood and who speak our tongue, we turn not only to a country which has deeply aroused our interest during the past year, but to one whose women have long been closely connected by sympathy and interchange of idea, with all those in England who are working for their own sex.

When Max O'Rell visited the States he said that if he could be born again he would shout at the top of his voice, 'Oh, make me an American woman!' so impressed was he with the advantages they enjoy and the instances in which they have reached what women in other countries are still aiming at.

American women, we may allow at once, are very different from English. They exist under peculiar conditions of descent, of climate and of government; they are intensely individual, and their individuality is strongly hereditary, so

that in the second or third generation the peculiar qualities given by the admixture of American blood are easily marked.

If she is different from pre-natal causes, the American is rendered still more so by her up-bringing. She cannot be treated like a French or German girl ; she will not give the blind obedience to authority which they so naturally render ; she can only be ruled by winning her conviction. From the first she lives with her parents, joining in their meals, their amusements, and their conversation. The nursery and school-room life, as we understand it, is practically unknown in the States.

It may be said that it is impossible to generalise upon such a subject. America is a vast continent, and the women of the North are not as the women of the South, the women of Boston differ from the ones of Philadelphia, those of New York are in many points unlike either, while in Chicago or San Francisco we touch yet another world ; but while this is true enough, we are yet conscious of some broad resemblances, more apparent possibly to a foreign than an accustomed eye, and seem able to trace reasons for these prevailing traits.

An extraordinary enthusiasm for education is characteristic of nearly all classes and sections of the community in the United States. This feeling reveals itself, not only in the newspaper press, the reviews, the general interest of the public, but in the social status of teachers and the respect paid to them and in the enormous sums devoted to educational purposes, both by public bodies and private individuals. The chief reasons generally accepted for this enthusiasm are, first, the democratic constitution of the country and the constant immigration, which makes a public education which ensures that English shall be taught and spoken, the only guarantee for a homogeneous nation, and in fact the only safeguard for its continued existence. Secondly, the presence of a section of the people with whom education rises to the dignity of a belief, almost of a religion, and who see in it the antidote to the love and pursuit of material welfare which has become so conspicuous in America. Throughout the States we find a marked uniformity in the method of organisation of the schools, and the teachers in all parts have access to the newest ideas, and can acquire the best technical knowledge.

The public schools are controlled by local bodies resembling

our School Boards, upon which women are eligible. The word 'public' always denotes *free*, and all the elementary and high schools admit the two sexes to study in common. Women form an overwhelming majority of the teachers in these schools, and it is a preponderance which is increasing. In Massachusetts, for example, female teachers are nine times as numerous as male, and many of these teachers are the daughters of men of excellent standing, who find in teaching a lucrative and satisfying career, and who occupy a position of importance and consideration. In the eastern states the rise of social distinctions has had much to do with the development of private schools for girls, but very few children are educated at home by governesses.

Every effort is made to give equal opportunities to all children and young people. If college is not attainable, there are capital secondary schools, evening classes, and high schools maintained by local taxation. Travel, succeeding generations of culture and increasing wealth are doing their work in emphasising class distinctions, and the three divisions of the aristocracy, the middle and the working classes really do exist, but it is always felt that any girl may come in later life to the position of a leader of society, and sudden promotion is far commoner and more easily accepted than it is even now in the Old World.

The freedom that is the keynote to the education of the American girl is carried into school life. She studies because she wishes to do so and because she understands the importance of study. The discipline in the schools is described as admirable; the children govern themselves; they make no attempt to shirk or to waste time; there are very few rules, no small punishments, no elaborate supervision by teachers, and no recognised system of prizes and rewards. Dr. Harris, in his report on the public school of Washington, says he went into three hundred rooms and never once heard a pupil reprov'd for disorder—an ideal state of things which is attributed partly to the national character and partly to the system of trusting the pupils. Attendance is looked upon as a privilege, and the rules regarding regularity are very severe. A pupil who misses more than two days in a term, without a thoroughly satisfactory excuse, is liable to be dismissed or suspended. To quote the words of a teacher of experience, 'Young America takes school seriously and goes to it as to

business.' The great majority of the daughters of mercantile and professional men receive their education in these schools, though in the East especially, the custom of sending girls to private schools is a growing one. The fees of these are often very high, and among the teachers are a large proportion of college graduates, including men and women who have taken high honours at English universities. The best resemble women's colleges in their social life, in refined culture and freedom of discipline. The teaching given in public and in private schools does not differ in any marked degree. In both Latin and mathematics are taught. There is nothing like our custom of teaching foreign languages at an early age, but Americans travel so much, that many of the children of the well-to-do learn to talk French and German by going abroad with their parents, and have foreign maids and nurses. The idea in teaching is that the pupil should discover how to get knowledge for herself. She is thrown very much on her own resources, and relies comparatively little on her teacher's help. A noticeable feature is, that after studying a subject and reading it up, pupils are exhaustively questioned in it, are required to give a digest of their study, and not only to answer questions, but to answer *well*; in good English, succinctly and fluently. Much attention is paid to this accomplishment, and it may be one reason why Americans are often such good talkers. The principle that you only learn what you teach yourself runs through all the system and tends to readiness and self-reliance. Exactly the same education is given to girls as to boys. Parents consider their daughters' education to be as important as that of their sons. The buying of the best text-books and, indeed, of all kinds of books, is much more a national habit in America than with us.

A great deal of the preparation for university education is done by private schools. When universities were first started for women in 1869, eight thousand students were admitted. At the present time they enroll more than 25,000 of every social class.

The university education given to women has, as in England, been modelled on that of men, but the men's differs a good deal from the English plan. Versatility and general knowledge is considered more useful than advanced scholarship and devotion to one subject. There is, however, a form

by which a young man or woman who has arrived at a certain stage of study and wishes to specialise in any one branch, can be affiliated to a college for this purpose. It is not easy to ascertain how well American students compare with our own. In music, which is an extra, and not part of the regular curriculum, one college at least has lately engaged a highly certificated English teacher to act as examiner and to gauge the pupils' acquirements.

The question of the co-education of the sexes in universities is still a vexed one. Some professors think that young men and women work better and more restfully apart; others demonstrate that the system has been extremely successful in those institutions where it is established. In the more western states—Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, and California—the custom has gone on for many years, and no difficulties have arisen. In the eastern states colleges exclusively for women are the rule. The number of women attending is nearly always smaller than that of men, but in 1889, at the University of Michigan, they were 369 women and 789 men, and in the University of Minnesota, 230 women and 770 men, while Oberlin had 901 women and 812 men.

On the whole, the eagerness to make full provision for women has shown itself much more keenly in America than in England, and the establishment of some of the best colleges is due to private endowments, though, as far as the building is concerned, they have none quite equal to Holloway College. The libraries and observatories are excellent, and the residential houses built round, in which many of the students live, under the charge of a lady, are delightful little homes. In those colleges where the pupils 'live in' the rule is to have two or three bedrooms to each sitting-room, and perhaps this arrangement accounts for the want, which has been a good deal commented upon, of that social life among the students in their own rooms which is such a marked and pleasant feature in English college life. The hours are considerably longer than in England, fifteen hours a week being devoted to lectures. English students usually consider about six hours of preparation necessary for every hour's lecture, but this would be manifestly impossible, and the authorities themselves put the amount of preparation expected at two hours for each lecture. This would not seem to point to so high a standard of work as with us, but the standard is not a low one, and the pupils

can only attain it by working long hours. It has been said that the students lack time to think, and also that they have not time to avail themselves of opportunities for physical exercise.

Of late years more attention has been given to gymnastics and drill, and much time and thought have been spent in introducing them into schools and colleges, but the spontaneous love of games and outdoor fun, so universal in England, has not yet found its counterpart among American girls.

All authorities concur in pronouncing the American woman to be more highly-strung and nervous, more excitable and more rapidly developed in thinking power than women of European countries. She needs to be restrained rather than stimulated, needs a curb rather than a spur. It is indeed on the score of health that those Americans who most admire their countrywomen are sorely exercised. They lament the decline of the birth-rate, the nervous tension and restlessness of the young, and the almost habitual ill-health of the older women. College girls are reported to constitute a comparatively healthy body, but nerves, worry, and, above all, want of exercise, are the causes of ill-health oftenest mentioned. The constant eating of candy and drinking of iced water account for the prevalence of decayed teeth, which has made the American dentists the best in the world; and another grave indictment, brought equally against private houses, colleges, and high schools, is the habitual over-heating of living and class-rooms by means of pipes and stoves.

College women are fast becoming the educated class, *par excellence*, in America. A large number of girls in the high schools look forward to becoming teachers. More than one-third of the graduates of the oldest colleges have married, more than two-thirds have either married or become teachers, but if a girl leaves a high school or a private school, whether she goes to college or goes into society, it is open to her to choose a profession. Women now enter every sort of profession in America; they become architects and engineers, authors and editors, physicians and ministers. Many more in proportion than in England are employed as clerks or secretaries by the Government, by telegraphic and other companies, and by publishing houses. Last year lady clerks, secretaries, and typists reached the enormous number of

188,000. 'Clergymen' have increased during the last eighteen years from 67 to 1,522; dentists, physicians, and surgeons, from 551 to 7,300. Last year there were 16,000 female painters and sculptresses, and 3,883 actresses, and 3,163 authoresses and lady writers. Mr. Bryce, in his 'American Commonwealth,' says: 'Taking one thing with another, it is easier for women to find a career, to obtain remunerative work of an intellectual, as of a commercial or mechanical kind, than in any part of Europe.' Popular sentiment is entirely in favour of giving them every chance, as witness the new constitutions of several western states, which expressly provide that they should be equally admissible to all professions and employments. It is in miscellaneous occupations of a very large range that their enterprise and ingenuity is most strongly shown. To take a few examples, haphazard, in Buffalo a woman manages a street-cleaning bureau. In Georgia women are presidents and directors of banks, the strictest financier in New York is a woman. In Arkansas one has started a young women's building society, which is making great strides in popularity, another is making her fortune as a land surveyor. In West Virginia one drives a locomotive engine, and is said to keep her machinery and engine-box like a model kitchen. Women act as river-pilots, mining experts, train-despatchers, nursery-gardeners, and company promoters. They invent new means of existence. Many live by supplying the public and luncheon clubs with home-made delicacies, such as cakes and mayonnaises, exquisitely made, others shop for business men, and in all these callings, great and small, they acquit themselves, not merely passably, but with conspicuous ability. In many of the southern states women own and manage large plantations, while in Texas they own and successfully work large stock farms; many are beginning to start poultry farms and to trade in strawberries and early vegetables on their own account. One describes how one day she was packing her strawberries for the Chicago market and ran out of clover. 'I just went to the old mint-bed and covered my boxes with that,' she said. 'To my surprise the Chicago merchant sent me back a dollar for the mint. During the rest of the year I shipped him mint every week, and have now made it a regular industry.'

To the women of the South the issue of the struggle for emancipation brought severe changes, the wreck of private

fortune, a long period of suffering and privation ; but the mothers and daughters of the South have borne their part nobly, in self-sacrifice for father, son, and brother, and have striven after self-culture against almost insurmountable difficulties, while doing their share in developing the material resources of the country. The woman of the old Southern days was educated for a life of beauty and luxury ; under the new conditions all her latent energies have been called for ; she braced herself to work with the consciousness that the situation was a deperate one, and as the way has smoothed itself and wealth has increased, she has turned to give more time and money to intellectual culture.

As writers, particularly of fiction, American women take a high place. A study of their work in this line would need a paper to itself, but such names as Mary Wilkins, Louise Chandler Moulton, Agnes Repplier, Louisa M. Alcott, and Mrs. Hodgson Burnett, are as familiar to us in this country as in their own. In politics they do not seem to take such a general interest as their English sisters. They have never hitherto canvassed at an election, but there is a strong party in favour of the Suffrage, which they have possessed in Wyoming since 1869. In Colorado the franchise was extended to women by a large majority in 1893. In many of the other states they vote on the school question, on licensing, and on other municipal affairs. Their influence seems to have been entirely for good, as far as it can be measured, but it is very hard to get any great numbers to vote at all, and in the districts where they do possess the franchise they are in a numerical minority. The position of women in America in the eyes of the law is on the whole so satisfactory that they are not impelled to work for the Suffrage in the hope of obtaining many tangible benefits. In nearly all the states married women have complete rights over their property. The laws of divorce apply equally to husband and wife, and the mother's authority over her children is very nearly equal to that of the father. On this last point she may seek for improved terms, but the demand for the franchise, which in some quarters is very intense, arises more from an abstract sense of justice, and from the feeling that the exclusion of woman from political power puts her on a lower plane than man. The enfranchisement of the negro is one of the strongest arguments advanced for the inclusion of intelligent and educated women. The movement

has found but little support among the 'upper classes'; indeed, a very large number are hostile to it—perhaps more than in England.

In no other country have women borne so conspicuous a part in the promotion of moral and philanthropic causes. The 'causes' of America are famous. They band themselves together as advocates of temperance and conduct the crusade with extraordinary zeal. Ladies largely manage the charity organisations of the great cities, they establish preventive and rescue homes, and support benevolent institutions of every possible variety. Their influence is exerted largely through the medium of their clubs, which cover our literary and debating clubs, our reading unions and, to a great extent, our philanthropic societies. The clubs take up anything and everything. They have started kindergartens, established the order of 'Kings' Daughters'—a widespread ministering organisation. In Chicago they boast that they have stirred up the municipality all round. Every town has its array of women's clubs, which form a common meeting-ground for the discussion of their interests, which carry intellectual debate into remote provincial villages, and which are connected with one another by a far-reaching system of affiliation. In this way obscure lives that would otherwise become narrowed and circumscribed throw themselves into the larger aims of the day, and keep in touch in a wonderfully thorough manner with the great centres and the best leaders of thought and action.

Many of the rich and fashionable women of America subscribe largely and give time to promote the usefulness of the great philanthropic and educational clubs to which they belong. At the gatherings connected with these a great deal of speaking goes on. American women speak well, earnestly, and fluently. To our ideas they are apt to be over-enthusiastic and a little high-flown in tone, but no doubt the intense and thoroughly genuine confidence the speakers feel in the powers of their sex, and their undoubting belief in the possibility of the fulfilment of an ideal by the efforts of women, go a long way to encourage, to support, and to nerve to fresh exertion. They are decidedly religious; Churches of all denominations are well kept up and services and meetings diligently attended, but their emotional character appears in their tendency to embrace new and extravagant forms of religion—such as Christian Science, which has attracted thousands of both sexes in the States.

There is one marked difference between American girls and those of almost every other nation. Among these last marriage is looked upon as woman's promotion. In America alone it has hitherto been considered to be a sacrifice of social consideration. American society is kept up by and for women ; and among women it is the unmarried girl who is paramount. Everything is ordered for her enjoyment—'parents, uncles, aunts, elderly friends, even brothers, are ready to make their own comfort and convenience bend to the girl's wishes.' Her ornaments are as handsome, her dress as elaborate, all her appointments as well chosen as those of a married woman, and in a room full of both it is impossible to tell which is the maiden and which the young matron. This state of things considered, it is not surprising that young American girls are in no hurry to marry, and even should they elect to remain unmarried, their conduct excites no great surprise, but they go their way with unlimited independence and social enjoyment. When a marriage is arranged, it is an understood thing that the husband supports the wife. Many fathers give no dowries, and even when very rich often only make their daughters an allowance in preference to settling money upon them.

Following European fashions, the young married woman in the eastern towns occupies a much more important place in society of late years than she used to do, but she neither aims at nor succeeds in ousting the girl who is her equal in *savoir faire*, agreeable conversation, and social importance.

The wife occupies a position of greater consideration than we are accustomed to in other countries. It is true that she very often knows little or nothing about her husband's business, and has the vaguest idea as to what amount of income he enjoys, satisfied as long as there is money to be had for the asking ; and as long as there is money it is made over to her ungrudgingly, the husband spends his time and works often beyond his strength to supply the sometimes extravagant demands upon him. The tastes of the wife decide the whereabouts of the home and the direction of holiday travel. She cannot understand the self-abnegation which leads the English-woman, not only gladly but as a matter of course, to pass her winters in dull and uncongenial country neighbourhoods, merely because her husband wants to hunt and shoot.

The attitude of men to women in ordinary society is scarcely that to which we are accustomed. With us, when a man meets

a woman who wishes to talk on any topic that requires real thought, his tone is apt to be tinged with amusement or condescension. He takes for granted that his is the superior mind, and, like Dr. Johnson, before a dog walking on its hind legs, 'does not wonder that the thing is not done well, but marvels that it should be done at all.' An American man, even a stupid one, has none of this conviction of intrinsic superiority; he talks to a woman just as he would to a man, with greater deference, but recognising that she is quite as likely as he to have formed an opinion of value on any subject she has studied. And there is no doubt that American women can talk well. Max O'Rell instances, as one of no unusual type, a young lady whom he met, charming and well dressed, who asked him if he had read Renan's 'History of the Jews,' then just published. On his replying that he had not yet had time, she proceeded to give him a short and masterly description of the author's treatment of his subject, and this quite naturally, without a trace of pretension or pedantry. The consideration shown to women is very marked; the best places are kept for them on the railways, the best rooms set apart in the hotels, staring rudely at women in the streets would not be tolerated, and several writers concur in stating that after long frequenting of men's clubs they had never heard scandal or even gossip in one of them in connection with a lady's name.

Such deference explains much of the freedom enjoyed by young American ladies. This, however, is not so universal now as it once was. In the West it is still the custom for a girl to drive out with a young man, and even to allow him to escort her to a party, but in the Atlantic cities, such as New York and Boston, the influence of intercourse with Europe is making itself felt, and a more conventional etiquette begins to replace the old simplicity of intercourse. Girls still go to dances without chaperons, and young men call on them and are received by them alone. Girls are more frank in manner than in any other country, but their manner is rarely misconstrued, and nowhere do we find them more capable of resenting impertinence and of holding their own with ease, dignity, and good temper. They have been used, all their lives, to meet boys and men on an equal footing, and to associate constantly with them, and no feelings of flutter or timidity are aroused by their presence.

The life of the fashionable woman at Newport, or in one of

the great winter cities, is not unlike that passed in the round of the London season. She dresses, drives, dances, and receives a never-ending flow of visitors. It is the smart thing now to go in for physical exercise, to have a fencing-master, and to take a morning gallop. Perhaps it is rather an artificial effort, and country walks, and thick boots, and disregard of weather do not enter into the scheme of life. Some of the good old families still keep some simplicity of surroundings, but the extravagance of certain cliques in New York, in Chicago, still more in San Francisco, is boundless. The craze for money has been followed by the craze for rank, till we hear of thousands of dollars lavished on flowers and cotillon presents, of luxury in dress such as is still the exception with us, and of a society formed which is so select that it will only admit those within its ranks who can prove a descent from royalty, and, lo and behold, this democratic country turns out to be thickly peopled with the descendants of kings and queens, or at least of French and Italian princes. With all this, there are still many women in the gayest society who have a foundation of real and not superficial knowledge under their vivacity and gaiety, and an absence of fastness as distinguished from freedom. The pleasure of companionship between women is more recognised than it is with us. Large luncheon parties of women only are a feature of American society, and even dinners are not uncommon, and are not considered more likely to be dull than a men's dinner would be in England. This is partly owing to men being so constantly absent at business, but no one who has seen much of American women can doubt that they are genuinely satisfied with the society of their own sex; their mental attitude towards men is even slightly contemptuous. A strong affection and intimacy exists between mother and daughter; though, on the other hand, it is sometimes urged that the mother's self-abnegation is too complete, and that in country places she is allowed to drudge while the young girl enjoys herself. American women do not allow themselves to grow old; well-dressed, full of spirit and vivacity, they go on working and enjoying as long as life lasts.

If I were asked my impression of the strongest characteristic of the American woman, I should say she was the most natural, the most spontaneous woman in the world, thoroughly at ease and self-possessed. She may lack the Frenchwoman's

grace of always saying the right thing, but in talking to her you are conscious of coming into contact with the real woman, and of a woman who has her full share of earnestness and simplicity. It is this that prevents Americans from being vulgar in the worst sense, even when their manners are unconventional, and their accent disagreeable to English ears. There is an absence of pretension, and a straightforward way of speaking and thinking which atones even for a frank appreciation of rank and money. It is the absence of affectation and self-consciousness which makes the American the most adaptable of all women, so that, as M. Paul Bourget says, 'one of them may marry an English peer and no one would ever guess that her father was a pork butcher, or kept a little shop in Chicago before the conflagration.'

According to Mr. Bryce, there is reason to think that the American system tells directly for good upon men as well as upon the whole community. 'The nation, as a whole, owes to the active benevolence of its women and their zeal in promoting social reforms, benefits which the customs of continental Europe would scarcely have permitted women to confer. Europeans have of late years begun to tender a well-deserved admiration to the brightness and vivacity of American ladies. Those who know the work they are doing in many a noble cause will admire still more their energy, their courage, their self-devotion. No country seems to owe more to its women than America does, nor to owe to them so much of what is best in social institutions and in the beliefs that govern conduct.'

American men, be it said, fully recognise this debt. They are proud of their women; they make it their dearest obligation to enforce respect for them; even in the lower classes any kind of violence offered to them is far more resented than it is in England. It is not too much to say that Americans look upon their women as the crowning glory of their country, and as the gauge of their place in civilisation.¹

EVELYN MARCH PHILLIPPS.

¹ In such limited space it is impossible to touch on the industrial question. In the event of these papers being collected for re-publication, the omission may be supplied.

THE FETICH LEOPARDS.

A STORY OF SIERRA LEONE.

IT was swelteringly hot and almost dark in the little iron-roofed station of the black constabulary which stood beside the Kabunda River in the forests of Sierra Leone. The paraffin lamps were turned very low, partly because the temperature was already almost insufferable, and also that they might not attract winged legions of biting things. Seen through the wide, open casements a broad reach of moonlit river rolled away to the south, and on either bank there rose a wall of sombre cottonwoods streaked with drifting haze, the fever-mist of West Africa which strikes the white man down.

Edward Marston, then in charge of that detachment of armed police, lounged in a monkey-skin chair, wiping beads of perspiration from off his wrinkled brow. He was a thin, spare man, with sun-bronzed cheeks whose curious hollowness yet told he had suffered from malaria, while the wrinkles beneath his weary eyes spoke of anxious thought. His well-worn blue serge tunic had been rent by many thorns, and the mud of the reeking swamp land was caked from ankle to knee. A trim officer of the West India battalion seated in a couch of Madeira work watched him smilingly, and at last said—

‘Another wild-geese chase, Marston, with of course the same result. Why don’t you take your leave when it’s due, and come home in the *Benin* with me, instead of catching fever and wearing yourself out up here? You will never lay hands on those leopard men, if there are such beings at all.’

The police official shook his head, and glancing at a photograph on the damp-soaked wall, answered regretfully, ‘It’s no use trying to tempt me, I cannot go until I have seen the matter through. Listen to what this black editor says,’ and opening a Freetown journal he read with a ring of indignation in the fever-weakened voice: ‘It is curious that our languid officials can do nothing to check the outbreak of murder now

rampant in the bush. The so-called human leopards have struck terror in all the villages along the Kabundas banks, and every week we hear of some fresh victim dragged from his hut and barbarously done to death. It seems that these outrages are perpetrated in honour of some forest fetich, and the leopard men, or whatever they are, believe that eating portions of the flesh will render them invisible. As we have said before, this is a disgraceful state of things, and that so many white officials should be highly paid for folding their hands and doing nothing has always been one of the anomalies of this over-taxed colony.'

The West India officer laughed as he answered, 'That is the usual palaver of every coloured journalist along this distressful coast—surely you don't expect praises for working yourself to death? I take my leave when it comes round, and go on undisturbed when I'm here, but you were always too serious—there's no use taking these things to heart.'

'The newspaper man is right in part,' said Marston, with gravity. 'I'm here to protect these people, and it's not quite the thing to leave them to be murdered with impunity. No. I'll see the game played out to the end, and then I'll go home and rest. Hallo! here comes a messenger—fresh trouble you may be sure.'

The 'thud-thud' of canoe paddles came out of the sultry night, and presently a big, bare-footed sergeant entered the creaking verandah with a negro panting beside him, whose naked skin glistened oilily in the faint glow of the lamps. 'Bring him in,' said Edward Marston. 'Stand there and tell your tale.'

'The headman of Kabunda village sends greeting,' began the newcomer in the native tongue, handing the officer a short carved staff, the universal credential of a messenger in Western Africa. 'His people are leaving their huts for fear of the fetich leopards, who have taken three men already. My master has paid his tax to the Government, and he asks for a little help.'

'He shall have it,' was the quiet answer. 'Give this man four pieces of cloth, sergeant, and get your best men under arms at once. I'll have to leave you, Linwood—a thirty mile march just finished, and now there's another on hand, with no time to go round up the river. This is how the languid official sits still with folded hands.'

A bugle-call rang shrilly through the wreaths of drifting mist, and presently five bare-legged policemen, thick-lipped, black-faced heathen in blue serge uniform, shambled into the moonlit compound, grumbling drowsily. Marston climbed into his hammock and the West India officer said—

‘I’m going down-stream in the morning to catch the old *Benin*, and I’ll make a point of calling upon your folks at home to give them an account of the picnic you are having here in the bush. But seriously, good luck go with you, and try to take care of yourself.’

‘Thanks, I hope it will,’ said Marston simply, ‘for I’m going to lay hands on those murderous brutes if I follow them to the Kong. Forward there, you rascals.’

The bearers raised the hammock poles to the pad on their woolly crowns, there was a crackle of dewy undergrowth, and with a jingle of carbine swivels the detachment moved away, a line of flitting shadows beneath the dark oil palms. The tall white African lilies gave up their heavy fragrance as the bearers trod them down, festoons of plaited trailers flung great drops of moisture upon them as they passed, and an odour of many spices came out of the steamy shade. Then, seen through the openings between the straight shafts of the palms and the buttressed cottonwood trunks, a glistening streak of silver flashed under the tropic moon, and presently the detachment came out upon the margin of one of those wastes of oozy mire which follow the banks of each waterway in the forests of Sierra Leone.

Marston leaned over the side of his hammock, and glanced at it suspiciously, then with a brief, ‘Pick your way, you bearer boys,’ and muttering, ‘I’ll have to chance it,’ sank wearily back again. For a space the bearers floundered knee-deep in the sucking mire, and then the foremost cried aloud as he sank suddenly to the waist. Down went the hammock-pole and its pad from off his crown, and with a smothered ejaculation the white man came down too. Flung out from the tilted fibre net, he drove both arms and helmet deep in the malodorous ooze, and for the next few moments wallowed and struggled blindly in the slime that sucked him down. Then rising breathlessly upright, he stood buried to the knees, green water trickling from him, as with vicious comments upon Africa he clawed the mud from his eyes.

A chuckle of suppressed laughter ran round the waiting men,

and, glancing ruefully as his uniform and doubled-up helmet, Marston said, 'Get on, you grinning rascals,' and waving aside the bearers splashed doggedly ahead. He crossed the narrow river with the current rippling about his waist, and crawling up the bank lay back in the hammock again, after a dose of quinine and whiskey as a fever preventative.

One morning, a few days later, he sat in a mud-built, native village, holding audience with the headman, and watching very attentively the crowd of half-naked negroes who listened in wondering silence beneath the branches of a mighty cottonwood tree. The scorching sand about him flung back a dazzling glare, the air was hot as the breath of a furnace, and Marston gasped with relief when the sable ruler, attired in a mate's cast-off uniform, rose from his chair beneath the big umbrella, and concluded his weary oration in the native tongue.

'So at nights my people lay very close in their huts for fear of the fetich leopards, but twice when dawn came we found that one was gone. How he went there was no one knew. No black man can see these leopards, even those who are wise in the magic of the bush, so as I pay the taxes I sent for the help of the officer men before they slay us all.'

A murmur of approval followed, and it did not escape Marston's trained observation that a whispering group of fetich priests regarded him suspiciously. 'H'm,' he said, half aloud, 'it's curious how they believe in the invisibility theory,' and raising his voice answered with an assurance he was very far from feeling, 'So I have come to help you, and your people may sleep in peace, for these are only men. There are some among you who know my words are true, but if these send word to the murderers they will assuredly be hung, for few things are unknown to the white men. And now this palaver is ended. We shall see what we shall see.'

During the week that followed Marston scoured the steamy bush, and returned each nightfall very tired and disappointed, for he found no trace of the leopard men, while signs were not wanting that some hostile influence anticipated each move. Once his meal of palm-oil chop tasted suspiciously and he emptied it in the dark. Several times he found venomous spiders under his pillow at nights, while three-inch, meal-tinted centipedes seemed to have a fancy for crawling into his boots. But he held on grimly, living on tinned provisions, and trying

to instil caution into his sable subordinates, who, after their usual manner, fared royally, for the native policeman is skilled in various ways of enlarging his commissariat. At last the matter came to a crisis when a black sergeant sought him with the news that two men were sick.

‘We found a few strayed fowls in the forest, and these bushmen gave us, their brave protectors, the finest of the yams,’ he said, with a guileless look. ‘No, we did not take them, the officer knows we do not do such things, but two of the men must have eaten something that was bewitched, for now their groaning is awful, and I think they will certainly die.’

Taking a phial with him from his travelling medicine-chest, Marston entered the policemen’s hut, and spoke certain words in their hearing which left them in abject fear. Then he came forth smiling, and thinking half aloud, a trick which most white men learn in the bush, said, ‘I don’t fancy from the symptoms it is anything very bad, and a treble dose of emetic will soon put matters right, as well as impress a warning. And now, I don’t think we should waste more time in this unhealthy place, but I must speak my mind to that headman in return for his hospitality.’

The bush ruler listened trembling, and then answered, ‘Why should I use treachery? it was I who sent for help. But the fetich men rule this village, and no headman dare interfere with them; perhaps they make their profit in a time like this. There is one among them goes out each night in the bush, and I think if the white men could shoot him quietly it would be better for my people. His hut is under the paw-paw tree. But say no word of my warning or the rest will certainly poison me.’

‘He shall come for a journey with me,’ said Marston grimly, ‘if I take him by the neck, and when the matter is settled I shall see to these Ju-Ju priests. They have been working too much mischief in all this colony.’

Thus it happened that shortly before the dawn there was a loud knocking on the mud wall of a hut, and when a half-naked savage crept stealthily to the door with a reed spear in his hand, he was met by three carbine muzzles, while a stern-faced white man gave orders to lash his arms behind him. Then with a soft patter of naked feet on the soft, hot sand, and two lurching hammocks before them, a group of silent men disappeared among the shadows of the palms, and a

fetich priest marched among them, very much against his will, in deadly fear of the bayonet held close to the small of his back. But all they found—and this was probably not due to any assistance from their guide—was a space of trampled brushwood and the feathery ash of a fire, with other details at which Marston grew cold and sick. When he came forth from the strip of bush the bronze in his cheeks had paled and there was a fierce look in his eyes, while late at night a Ju-Ju man, covered with mud and bearing certain dishonourable scars upon him, crept stealthily into the village, and shut himself up in his hut.

Afterwards there followed a very memorable chase. Through steaming, creeper-choked forests, across miles of quaking swamp, and wastes of tangled plume grass Marston hurried his men. The sick and the worn-out bearers had to be left behind, and, in spite of burning noonday heat and deadly midnight mist, or the rush of tropical deluge, the search went steadily on, while the white officer's face grew grimmer at each disappointment. At one village the leopards had been seen but vanished again harmlessly, at another a mutilated victim was found at dawn just outside the furthest hut, then again a terror-stricken messenger brought news of some fresh outrage many leagues to the north, and the weary march was resumed once more. By this time Marston's uniform had been torn to rags by matted trailers and thorns, his boots scarcely held together, and every joint was aching with incessant toil. Now and then they passed the tents of some forest officer, but the leader refused each invitation to enter camp, declaring he would break up the murderous league if all the fetich impostors of Western Africa were banded together against him, and finally disappeared from European eyes in the silence of the bush. Thus it happened that when an official returning from the frontier was asked at headquarters, 'Have you any news of Marston?' his answer was—

'I met him and four limping policemen crossing the Kabunda swamp, with a northern Moslem who seemed to act as guide. The men were almost naked, and Marston might have been clothed from a rag-bag, but he would not stop a moment, and if it had been any other man I should have thought he was wrong in the head. It's not a safe country he's rambling through, and I hope he won't come to grief.'

At last, one steamy evening in the time of the rains, when the men were too lame to go further, Marston lay resting in the headman's house of a deserted native village away in the lonely bush. A square compound stretched about it, walled in by a rough stockade. Outside a row of mud-built huts clustered beneath the drooping fronds of cocoa-nut palms and massy cottonwoods, but each dwelling lay dark and silent in the sweltering tropic night. The officer was seated on a roll of fibre matting just inside the threshold, wondering if the burning pain in his throat could be accounted for by poison, or what had caused the languor which would not be shaken off. He knew he was now in a region whose inhabitants resented the presence of white intruders, but for that very reason hoped to find there those whom he sought.

'Pah!' he said, flinging away a damp cigar, 'everything reeks with moisture. Confound that taste in my throat!' Then he raised his voice a little, 'Hyah, Sergeant Lomo, send that Sofa guide to me.'

Hardly had he spoken than a dark figure rose out of the shadows beneath the eaves of the house, and obeying a gesture stepped quietly inside. The dim light of a native palm-oil lamp fell on his swarthy face, which was of finer type than that of any coastwise race, and the loose folds of dull blue cotton draping his splendid limbs. It also glinted on the inlaid barrel of a beautiful Arab gun, one of those examples of Eastern craftsman's skill which, crossing leagues of desert, may at times be found in the hands of the negro Moslem behind the fever-coast.

'Kali,' said the officer, using the semi-Arabic of the hinterland, for of a necessity he spoke several native tongues, 'tell me all the story, why you took service with me, to lead these men as guide. Part I know already—see that the rest it true.'

The big man leaned forward on the muzzle of the four-foot gun as he answered, 'I am of the northern soldier people, and I fought with Samadu, when he drove the other white nation through the forests of Senegal. But after that day at Bagweime, when the White Queen's servants turned back the Sofa spears, I and my brother became peaceful trader men. We drove the small white cattle many leagues south through the forests to sell to the heathen traders beside the muddy Rokell, and so I learned the bush trails. How did we get the cattle? the white

man smiles as he asks—some we bought with country cloth, and some we took with the sword, as it always has been beyond the peaks of the Kong. One night we lay outside a heathen village, and my brother slept near the cattle, as is wise in a land of thieves. In the morning the cattle were standing among the tall white grass, but there was no man beside them, only the torn skin of a leopard, and a trail of blood. When I followed it into the forest I saw—but there are things it is not good to remember, and this was one of them.’ Then the sonorous voice grew deeper. ‘So I swore by the Prophet I would have blood for blood, if I followed the slayers into eblis smoke, and it may be they are aided by devils, for there is magic in the bush. Thus I sought the white officer’s service, for I had seen his kind at work in the smoke of Bagweime, and I knew that a man might follow where one of that race should lead.’

‘You have done well,’ said Marston smiling. ‘Tell them to change the sentry—my eyes are heavy with sleep.’

The big man strode away through the shadows, and for a space Marston leaned against the doorway looking out into the night. Here and there a star glimmered faintly against the black vault of the heavens, the wall of sombre cottonwoods and the tufts of the taller palms cut the skyline sharply, but all below was hidden by wisps of haze, through which the compound palisade loomed shadowy and indistinct. Somewhere in the distance he could hear the drowsy gurgle of a river, and near at hand a monotonous splash of moisture on the leaves, but all else was very silent, for the footsore constabulary were wrapped in heavy sleep, save one who, as yet, kept watch beside the compound gate. Then a curious numb feeling replaced the pain in Marston’s head, and stretching his tired limbs on the matting he too sank into sleep, with the butt of a heavy revolver ready to his hand.

Presently the sentry, as sometimes happens with the bush policemen, felt very drowsy also, and curling himself up in an empty hut slept the sleep of the just. But one tall figure draped in loose folds of cotton flitted uneasily among the palms which hung their curving branches across the dim stockade. An instinctive feeling, inherited from generations of slave-raiding ancestors in the wilds of the Sudan, seemed to warn this watcher there was danger in the air, and with a gesture of comprehension he bent down over the print of a

foot in the forest mould which had not been there when darkness closed on the camp.

Meantime Marston lay in uneasy slumber with kaleidoscopic visions flitting through his brain : now of a pale woman standing with her hand on his arm under the English elms, and whispering that he must be very careful for her sake in Africa. Again there were leaping figures hung about with leopard's skin, glimmering fires, and heathen rites, and half-charred things in the ashes which had once been human bones. So it happened that when a glimmer of misty moonlight shone down on the dripping palms and four crawling objects moved stealthily towards the compound gate, there was neither official nor black private awake to challenge them. The foremost slowly rose erect, and leaned forward listening, a huge fantastic creature wrapped in leopard skin, with something that glinted metallically gripped in a sinewy hand. The tables were turned this time at least, for instead of Marston seeking the fetich leopards, the leopards were seeking him. But a man, with a long-bladed Soudanese matchet filed to a razor's edge in his hand, had followed their stealthy footsteps among the undergrowth. He had also learned all the tricks of forest warfare in many a fierce foray, and with a grim chuckle sped on before them noiselessly while they whispered together on nearing the stockade.

So, just as the last slipped through the compound gate, a bush policeman, rudely awakened by a matchet point, crept through the shadows to the entrance behind them, and stood there, pressing a Snider carbine firmly against his hip, with its triangular bayonet barring the narrow way. At that moment Edward Marston started violently from his sleep at the touch of a warning hand, and clutched the big revolver, but a low voice whispered in his ear, 'The fetich leopards come, and there is no time to rouse the others, for they seek you now. Lie still and watch ; a trap has been laid for them, and it will need the strongest magic to take them safely out.'

Then Marston, rubbing his heavy eyes, sat up wide awake, and saw some one vanish through the door of the hut. In spite of many trying experiences his throat grew parched and dry, while the skin tightened across his forehead as, weakened by the climate, and possibly poison too, he sat very still in the darkness, for the lamp had long burnt out. Something was drawing nearer very stealthily towards the silent hut, with a

scarcely audible patter of feet in hot, white dust. He felt a curious comfort in the cold touch of the revolver butt, and then an object that was blacker than the shadows rose upright in the door. Still he would do nothing rashly, and the forefinger only tightened round the trigger as the muzzle slowly rose. Then there was a swift rush towards him, and a ringing detonation as the revolver flashed red fire. An acrid film of powder smoke filled the gloomy hut, and through the vapour a creature that was huge and shadowy, more like a beast than a man, leapt right down upon him, as he swung himself aside.

The stumpy revolver barrel jerked sharply in his hand, he heard the snap of a spear-shaft when its point struck deep in the wall, and then felt himself borne backwards to the ground beneath a heavy weight. A mass of short fur hung over his face and eyes, what might be claws or fingers grappled at his throat, and he made desperate efforts to snatch his revolver free. But his right arm was jammed beneath him, and his left hand only slipped along a hot and grease-daubed limb, while he afterwards averred the recollection of that moment would last him all his life. His breath was slowly yielding beneath the deadly weight, the grip had tightened on his throat, and he felt with a thrill of horror that this thing was superhuman, or some fierce animal. Then he heard the 'swish,' of matchet and a sudden, crunching sound, the weight rolled back from off him, and staggering breathless to his feet he saw a heap of tumbled fur writhing upon the ground. Some one swung a gun-butt, and following the shock of a thudding blow the quivering mass lay still, while a clamour of startled voices rose from the compound outside.

Next moment he was in the moonlight, and saw three hurrying objects rush towards the gate. A flash of bright flame met them in the teeth, a bullet struck up a spirt of sand beside him, and obeying an uncontrollable impulse Marston yelled triumphantly as a gleam of fitful moonlight showed a uniformed figure with a faintly glinting bayonet in the centre of the passage way. It was very evident the fugitives saw it also, for one of them wheeling at an angle leapt towards the stockade, and, though the ringing bark of a Snider shook the dewy palms, catching at the summit managed to scramble across.

'Stand fast—don't let them pass you!' he shouted breathlessly, and the two who were left made back for the shadow of the hut.

'Don't shoot. Close in upon them. Head them off from the palisade,' Marston cried again, and running men converged across the compound until the pursued, hemmed in by the twinkling bayonets and the wall of the headman's hut, stood sullenly still.

'Fling down the spears!' he shouted, hurrying towards a gigantic figure, while the men closed in behind. Then with a sudden whirring a streak of bright steel caught the moonrays, and again as he bent to avoid it a spear with devilish corkscrew blades just missed his side by an inch. Ere he recovered his balance there was a rush of feet behind him, carbine stocks whirled in the air, and one of the bush policemen rolled over among the sand, locked in a desperate struggle with a fur-covered object that howled as it clawed at his throat. Another brought down the brass-bound butt wherever a blow might tell, and the third had his foot on the breast of a prostrate adversary, who lay still, glaring at the weapon held threateningly over his head.

'A very poor kind of devil,' said a contemptuous voice in his ear. 'But this one has mischief in him yet. Now pass the ti-ti about him,' and the Sofa guide, seizing the woolly hair, bent the black neck on his knee, while the constabulary private slipped a loop of fibre lashing around the naked breast.

'Let go before you kill the man, and cheat those who wait for him,' said Marston. 'Drag him out in the moonlight,' and he stared down at the captive, who now lay securely bound. It was a broad-chested negro, smeared with palm oil, and wearing the ominous white rings about his eyes. The grinning head of a leopard had fallen from his crown, and the loose skin lay beneath him among the trampled sand. But there was still a look of fury in the scarcely human face, and the strong white teeth that were filed to a point worried at the lashing that held one shoulder fast, while a private suggested they should finish the matter there.

'No,' the officer answered; 'this is the Government's palaver, and they both will be hung together where they first began their work.'

'One at least they will not hang,' answered the guide grimly, 'for he lies dead in the hut, and another is limping through the bush with a bullet under his skin.'

'Go with him, Sergeant Lomo, and bring that other in—alive you understand,' said Marston. 'Pah! this sickening

climate ; my head throbs like a drum !' and flinging himself down upon the sand he leaned back against the wall sucking at a damp cigar, until dawn broke across the forest and the two returned again. They had found no trace of the fugitive, and soon with their prisoners among them the little detachment struck south and east through the bush. A week later five ragged scarecrows limped into the compound of a little Government station beside the muddy Rokell, and the officer who came forth to meet them started at the sight of the haggard white man who, with the torn uniform hanging daubed with mire about his limbs, leaned on a black sergeant's shoulder, shaking like a leaf.

'This is a resurrection, Marston ; we had given you up as dead,' he said, and the other answered feebly, 'It's too long a story to tell you now, and I am sick of poison, I think. Will you send these men on in the launch at once?—I'll try to write a despatch.'

Five minutes later the pen slipped from his nerveless fingers and his head fell forward on his hands, while the Government surgeon, glancing at the shaky scrawl, said softly, 'Help me to carry him into the other room. The poor fellow seems badly broken down, and I should say it might be a kindness to add a postscript to that despatch.'

It was three weeks before Edward Marston was able to reach headquarters, where he found official compliments waiting him, and his name in every one's mouth. He also heard their guide had entered the Government service, and that a few days before two more of the murderous leopard league had been publicly hanged. But he had other things to think of, for there was a steamer home next day, and late on the second evening he saw the last of Africa fade into the eastern haze.

HAROLD BINDLOSS.

A GLIMPSE OF MILITARY LIFE IN INDIA NINETY YEARS AGO.

It is plain to those who watch the tendencies of the literature of the years as they pass by, that the big concrete Mind of the Public has its trains of thought, just as have the separate, individual minds of which that mighty whole is composed. Some trifling circumstance starts the big Mind working, and it follows on, from point to point, in due sequence. Something sets the current flowing in a particular direction, and its course is marked by a host of literature—novels, biographies, magazine articles, reviews—just as the course of a hidden stream is marked by the alders and meadowsweet fringing its banks.

One of these trains of thought—to give a very recent instance—has been busy over India and the Indian Mutiny. What first turned the current of thought in that direction it would be hard to say ; but certain it is that the general mind has been hovering persistently over that land of wonders and reviewing the situation there, at a special period, from many different points of view. Witness the tide of printed matter, having India and Indian celebrities for its themes, which has lately risen upon us. Was it Lord Roberts's autobiography which drew our eyes and thoughts to the land on which he won his renown ? Or Mrs. Steele's tales, with their mingling of strange glamour and stern painful realism ? It would be hard to tell. Probably we should have to travel much further up the stream than we have any notion of, to find the spring from which this mingling of the waters took its source.

After dwelling so much upon affairs Indian during that most burning era of her history, there is a certain refreshment to be found in turning to the India of a very different period—that of the opening years of the present century, 'when George the Third was King' and the destinies of Hindostan were still in great measure swayed from the East India House.

The conditions of India between 1800 and 1812 were far other than they had become by the time the Mutiny broke out

and still further removed from the modern India of which that was the fiery dawn. The Punjaub was still a quasi-independent Sikh state; native princes still reigned in many districts; the King of Oudh still held sway—a sway that was merely nominal in some respects, but fearfully real in others—from his palace at Lucknow; at Delhi there was still the Great Moghul. The unexplored fastnesses of the Himalayas swarmed with wild tribes who were a source of constant danger and unrest to the white usurpers of the plains below. The generation of Clive had passed away; so had that of Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore; the men—soldiers and civilians—who were to change the face of India and win it for civilisation and peace, were children yet. The Lawrences and Sir Robert Montgomery were at play in their Ulster homes, little dreaming of the tasks before them; Lord Dalhousie and Lord Canning were not yet born.

The conditions of life under which Europeans lived in India ninety years ago were manifestly different, in many ways, from what they became later on. There was still much of the wonder and strangeness, of the sense of being surrounded by unknown dangers, of keeping their footing at the peril of their lives, which attend settlers in a new and alien land. Yet it was then a land of which Henry Martyn, shortly after his landing in 1806, could write to Lydia Grenfell, 'The natives are the most harmless and timid creatures I ever met with. The whole country is the land of plenty and peace.' And a sergeant's wife in a royal regiment could say, 'Come, come, you should not fret. Think how much better we are off in this country than in England.'

In the year 1847, in a house on the outskirts of Worcester, an old woman might have been seen, seated in her armchair, with sheets of paper before her and her pen going busily and happily, backwards and forwards, at the rate of four or five hours a day, and this despite the fact that she was in her seventy-third year. This old lady was writing her memoirs,—memoirs of a life stretching well back into the previous century—of a life which had seen much prosperity and also many hardships, difficulties, and sorrows.

This old lady was Mary Martha Butt, better known as Mrs. Sherwood, the friend of Henry Martyn and of Daniel Corrie, first Bishop of Madras, and the authoress of 'The Fairchild Family.'

Mrs. Sherwood, in concluding her memoirs, makes eager acknowledgment of the help given in her task by a beloved daughter and a kind son-in-law. But though, in the actual manual labour, daughter Sophia may have helped, and in the correcting of the proof-sheets Sophia's husband may have given his assistance, the creation of the memoirs—the vigour and sweetness and touch of genius that give them their glow and charm—are, one cannot doubt, entirely Mrs. Sherwood's own. As a presentment of life and manners among English gentlefolk, and a picture of what English 'young ladies' did and thought and dreamed at the close of the last century, it would be difficult to find better among contemporary annals. And as a portrait of an Englishwoman, in her refinement, sincerity, courage, and tenderheartedness, as revealed by herself with a singular simplicity and naïve charm, it would be hard to beat that which we find in this autobiography.

Mary Butt was born in the year 1775. Her father, the Rev. George Butt, was a clergyman of considerable means and position, and Mary's early childhood was spent in the rectory house of Stanford, in Worcestershire, which house her father had himself built.

No doubt Mary Butt owed much of her fervent delight in country places, of her quick eye for all that was beautiful, either in itself or on account of its associations, to the rich, smiling beauty of her early home. Stanford Rectory, both within doors and without, was to the eager-minded, sensitive, beauty-loving child a 'terrestrial paradise.' Her description of the 'four distinctive views—so distinct that it could hardly be conceived how these could have been combined in a panorama,' to be got from the four sides of the rectory, though somewhat lengthy and tiresome in its old-fashioned stately periods, has astonishing freshness and vividness when we remember that it is a memory of nearly seventy years before. And the inside of the house, to every room of which 'the genius of my father gave a character'—with its 'hanging staircase,' and its 'prints or portraits' in every sitting-room, 'to each of which was affixed some tale or legend familiar to me in earliest childhood, and repeated to me over and over again by my father,' must have been of a character to stimulate all the native fancy and imagination of his like-minded daughter.

Mrs. Sherwood shows us herself, a big, overgrown child—at

thirteen as tall as a woman—scampering about the ‘sweet woods’ and ‘deep glens’ of Stanford, ‘dressed like a child in a pinafore,’ ‘bright auburn’ hair tumbling down her back, and with a huge wooden doll slung by a string round her waist. The doll was concealed under childhood’s badge, the pinafore, to hide it from the view of ‘the neighbours,’ who thought her too old, or at any rate too large, for such pastimes. The old woman, looking back on the child of long ago, was perhaps right in her naïve conclusion that, with her great length of limb, stooping shoulders, and infantile garb, she must at that period have appeared ‘a very extraordinary sort of personage.’

One brother and one sister were the companions of Mary Butt’s childhood, but in her wanderings in the woods and fields, where she dreamed and pondered and, above all things, looked about her, she seems to have been always alone. ‘That inward eye, which is the bliss of solitude,’ was hers in a very high degree; her mind was like the sensitive plate of a photographic camera, for ever taking impressions and retaining them with an extraordinary force and vividness. The earlier pages of her autobiography breathe of the woods and fields and distant views that surrounded her childhood, and one feels most vividly the intense and thrilling joy they gave her.

But the future authoress of ‘The Fairchild Family’ had lively powers of observation, not for rural scenes only, but for human nature, as it presented itself before her childish gaze. Her father was a man of troops of friends and of a large hospitality; he was also chaplain to the king, and therefore a frequent visitor to London, where he had many acquaintances about the court. Thus both at Stanford and at Kidderminster (of which place Mr. Butt became also vicar in 1788) there was much coming and going, and guests were frequent under a very friendly roof.

To the tall, shy, silent eldest child these visitors were a ceaseless study and never-failing amusement. Every feature of their outward man was noted and treasured up; no oddities of their speech and demeanour escaped observation. I only wish there were space to give some of Mrs. Sherwood’s exquisite little pictures—of ‘Mr. Dicky, the linendraper’s son,’ with his ‘most minute mind’ and the light chintz dressing-gown which he always wore in a morning, ‘with a rose-coloured ribbon round his waist;’ of the French lady of

fashion who was a guest at Stanford Rectory and arrived 'in a post-chaise with a maid, a lap-dog, a canary bird, an organ, and boxes heaped upon boxes till it was impossible to see the persons within.' Mrs. Sherwood remarks : 'I was, of course, at the door to watch her alight'—and the description of her dress, which follows, is indeed a triumph of recollection.

It may be possible, by kind permission of the editor, to give, in a subsequent number of *THE MONTHLY PACKET*, some sketches of a childhood and girlhood, not perhaps strictly remarkable in themselves, but full of charm and individuality from the way in which they are described. But our business to-day is not with the wild, frolicsome child or the shy, eager-minded schoolgirl at Reading Abbey, but with Mrs. Sherwood as the soldier's wife in India.

Among the numerous figures that appear on Mary Butt's childish stage one is a little motherless cousin, Henry Sherwood, the son of her mother's brother. This 'uncle Sherwood' was a standing cause of grief and anxiety in the family, on account of his wandering habits and expensive tastes. The strange adventures and extraordinary hardships which these propensities of his brought to his son, during the early days of the French Revolution, make one of the most curious narratives which, I should think, has ever been written.

Mrs. Sherwood records, with her usual minuteness, her first sight of her cousin, when brought by his grandfather to live for a time under the care of his aunt, her mother. 'I have his figure exactly before me : he was particularly small of his age and had fair hair. Our grandfather had caused him to be dressed in a full suit of what used to be called pepper-and-salt cloth. He was standing at the tea-table, between his grandmother and aunt, and smiled with apparent great delight when he saw me.'

This little cousin—'a very quiet little personage, very good-tempered, and very much in awe of his aunt'—when he grew up became Mary Butt's kind and affectionate husband, whom she only survived by two years.

At the time of their marriage Mr. Sherwood was a junior officer in the 53rd Foot ; not long afterwards he obtained the paymastership of the regiment, which office he retained till his retirement from the army, after many years' service. It is impossible to linger over his wife's history of her first expe-

riences of life in a marching regiment, though her account is full of curious details and vivid impressions, among which hardships are not lacking. Among her other experiences was that of the birth of her eldest child.

This baby she had to leave for India when the little one was 'eleven months and eighteen days old.' The long-expected order for foreign service came, and the regiment, with its officers and their wives, gathered at Portsmouth to embark on a vessel named the *Devonshire*. The *Devonshire* was an armed vessel, and sailed in a considerable fleet of East Indiamen, protected by at least one man-of-war, for we must remember that this was war-time, and an attack from French cruisers was one of the dreads, and became one of the experiences, of the voyage. 'Those who have not been at sea,' says Mrs. Sherwood, in her sedate phraseology, 'can never conceive a hundredth part of the horrors of a long voyage to a female in a sailing-packet,' and we can paraphrase her remark by saying that those who nowadays make their three *weeks'* voyage to India, even in the comparative discomfort of a troopship, can have no conception of the trials of the three *months'* voyage of ninety years ago. In Mrs. Sherwood's case her troubles must have been greatly aggravated by the fact that the birth of her second child was approaching.

After an encounter with two French ships (during which all the women and children were sent down into the hold, where they sat for hours in darkness, 'in total ignorance of what was to be our fate, or the fate of those above us'), and several threatenings of the like from other privateers, at length the voyage drew slowly to its close.

One of its few consolations for poor Mrs. Sherwood had been the study of the 'Arabian Nights,' which some one on board had lent her, apparently as a guide-book and introduction to the East!

She makes her simple reflections, as they approach the shore, based on her late studies: 'On the 23rd [of August] we found ourselves close to Madras, for we could see the masts of the ships in the bay, and as we proceeded, one new object after another presented itself to our view. Not a cloud was seen on the deep yet brilliant azure of the sky. The sun poured its dazzling rays unbroken on the long line of shore, which appeared to be richly scattered with palaces standing amongst groves of such trees as are seen only in tropical

countries. With the aid of glasses we could discern the natives moving about amid these scenes, and actually distinguished a set of bearers carrying a palanquin. It seemed now, as I looked upon these scenes, that all the visions of Oriental pomp and luxury in which I had often indulged in fancy during my voyage would now be realised. The new and elegant beauties of that dazzling shore filled me with delight. Oh ! how ardently did I long to be there !

At length the officer's young wife, after braving the terrors of the landing, through the wild surf that for ever beats along the Coromandel Coast, found herself actually standing upon the new continent, 'thousands and thousands of miles removed from my native home.' She had the gratification of beholding herself among 'the griffins'—which she records to be 'the name given to any European just arrived in India.' Full of innocent wonder, she must have gazed around her with those eager dark eyes, noting all the wonders of this strange land ; although, as she naïvely remarks, "As an infant opening its eyes on a new world is unable to distinguish one thing from another, or to comprehend any object it sees, so, in some degree, my first views of India seem strangely confused in my recollections."

After a short stay at Madras, the regiment received orders to re-embark and proceed to Bengal, its ultimate destination ; and in due course the voyagers of the *Devonshire* found themselves at anchor in one of the thousand mouths of the Ganges. 'This branch,' says Mrs. Sherwood, 'is called the Hoogley.'

At Calcutta the Sherwoods hoped that the regiment might be stationed for a time. An establishment of servants was collected, and the young wife had her first experience of housekeeping *à la mode de* India. Here too her first attempts were made at an occupation which was to be the chief labour and delight of her Indian life, and one of her chief claims on our grateful remembrance. Mary Sherwood had been gifted by nature not only with a vivid fancy and unusual powers of eye and memory ; she was also blessed with such a wealth of affection and largeness of heart as are given to few. Especially for children her arms were ever open, and her heart and home alike seemed capable of indefinite expansion.

The children of an English marching regiment were at that period in a most forlorn, neglected condition. No attempt had been made by Government to provide schools for them,

so that they were utterly uneducated ; while those—and they were many indeed, especially while the regiments were stationed in tropical countries—whose mothers died while far from home and friends were left in the most pitiful forlornness, to be cared for, or not, as the case might be, by the other women of the regiment.

To teach children and to care for motherless babes were two tasks that Mrs. Sherwood loved, and of both these tasks she had full measure during the years of her Indian sojourn. She had already been teaching one little boy, the child of a sergeant, on board the *Devonshire*, and no sooner was she settled at Calcutta than she began to teach him again, and added another pupil, the little son of a captain in their corps.

News soon came that the 53rd was to move up-country to Dinapore, many hundred miles up the Ganges. Nearly fifty years had still to pass before the sods were turned for Lord Dalhousie's railway along the Ganges valley ; in 1806 the only method of journeying up-country was by a sort of house-boat, known by its native name of 'budgerow,' which was towed up the stream by Hindoo boatmen. In this way Paymaster Sherwood and his ailing wife slowly voyaged on, day by day, into the heart of Bengal. The same six weeks' voyage was to be taken, very shortly after, by Henry Martyn, travelling from Calcutta to take up his first chaplaincy at Dinapore.

Mrs. Sherwood now discarded her British bonnet for 'a lace cap with European ribbons,' in which form of headgear, as she after describes, she and her party of eight little girls—her own and adopted children—all landed at Liverpool on their return to England. 'We were followed,' she records, with unruffled composure, 'wherever we went by hundreds of the residents of Liverpool. It must be understood we had not a bonnet in the party ; we all wore caps trimmed with lace, white dresses, and Indian shawls.'

At Dinapore, on Christmas Day, the Sherwoods' first-born son—the 'Little Henry' of her pathetic sketch—was born. Henry flits, like a little white ghost, through the pages of his mother's narrative. His short life, of fifteen or sixteen months, was throughout a life of weakness and suffering. 'Everything was againt my child,' his mother wistfully says. Among the countless fair English babies who have sprung into life under the Indian sun and found their tiny graves in that burning

soil, perhaps none have been more deeply mourned, and surely none have had the story of their little lives more tenderly told than this 'sweet little one'—this 'little melancholy, sad companion' of 'many mournful days at Patna and Dinapore.'

Dinapore, Berhampore—which Mrs. Sherwood calls 'a place of graves'—and Cawnpore were the three cities in which the Sherwoods' Indian life was spent. The regimental school, which formed the chief care and labour of the paymaster's wife, was promptly started at Dinapore, and, of course, moved with the regiment whenever it shifted its quarters. It quickly rose from about a dozen children to forty or fifty; and as the small scholars were utterly undisciplined and all more or less pampered and spoilt—as Indian children are almost bound to be—the work of teaching and managing them must have often taxed Mrs. Sherwood's strength and courage to the uttermost. This all the more because, as she herself reminds us, during the whole of her time in India she had the cares and burdens of motherhood upon her.

It was not long before the helpless little ones of the 53rd began to appeal to Mrs. Sherwood from another point of view. Sickness and death—though leaving Mr. Sherwood and his wife curiously unmolested—were for ever busy among the women and children of the regiment. The effects of the long voyage, the drinking habits of many of the women, and their total ignorance of the way to take care of themselves in a strange and deadly climate, made them an easy prey; and again and again there occurred the death of a wife and mother, leaving unlucky little children to the mercy of strangers. It was when Mrs. Sherwood's heart was near breaking for the loss of her little boy that the idea came to her of adopting an orphan child to be a companion to the infant Lucy, whom she had now (for a brief space) in her arms. She gives a touching description of the death of the young wife of a private named Child, and of the 'little pale girl, not much more than three years old,' who sat motionless on her dying mother's pillow, 'wholly unconscious of her threatened loss.' This little waif, Annie Child, was, on the death, a few weeks later, of her father, brought to Mrs. Sherwood and adopted by her. Annie's history, which is well worth reading—for was she not 'the youthful friend of Henry Martyn, Bishop Corrie, and Mrs. Sherwood'?—has been published by the S.P.C.K. in a little book under the title of 'Annie Child.'

Other orphan children came flocking to Mrs. Sherwood and found a refuge in her tender arms. One of them was an infant whose father, a sergeant in the regiment, had confided it to the care of a woman who set herself deliberately to starve it to death. The description of the child, when brought to Mrs. Sherwood, reads exactly like a 'Cruelty to Children' case ! Under her watchful care, however, little Sally gradually came round and grew into a sturdy maiden, who lived to accompany her kind friend to England and was happily married there. In a charming letter from Mrs. Sherwood to her mother in England we read : 'I have given much of my time, since the regiment went, to the education of my children, and I have brought them amazingly forward during these two months. Sarah, one of my orphans, can read Hindostanee with much facility, so as to be able to perform the clerk's part in the Hindostanee service.'

Amid a life of such constant activity it is difficult to believe that Mrs. Sherwood could find time to keep her pen busy ; nor does her autobiography much help us to realise the fact ; for she makes only such brief and casual mention of her writings that it is plain they did not occupy a large share of her thoughts and attention. Nevertheless, her brief memoir in the 'National Dictionary of Biography' tells us that she wrote 'over ninety-five stories and tracts.' By far the best known of these is the 'Fairchild Family,' of which we are told that 'most children of the English middle class born in the first quarter of the nineteenth century may be said to have been brought up on the "Fairchild Family."' Those born in the *last* quarter of the same century scarcely, we are afraid, know the book even by name !

It was for her Indian orphans and the children of the regimental school that Mrs. Sherwood wrote her 'Stories Explanatory of the Church Catechism.' The circumstances which, she tells us, set her upon writing this book give a curious glimpse of the limitations of English children born and bred in India. 'Having finished the "Indian Pilgrim" [a version of the 'Pilgrim's Progress' for the benefit of the Hindoos, edited by Mrs. Sherwood and translated into Hindostanee by Bishop Corrie] I began to write my "Church Catechism" for the use of my school, for I had a little before been thoroughly perplexed by finding that the children could not understand any common English narrative without asking many questions ;

for instance, on reading an English story one said, "What is a barn?" another, "Do they walk out at noon without a chatta?" "Are they not afraid of serpents in the grass?" This was rather too much,' comments Mrs. Sherwood, to whom barns and fields and wild, free ramblings over hill and dale, without let or hindrance from climate, or time of day, or hidden terrors in the grass, were among her most tenderly remembered joys. And she set herself to work to teach their little intellects about that far-away England which so many of them were never to behold with their eyes, and their little souls about the Church Catechism which should be the guide of their lives under whatever alien skies. But she herself says that into her book she wove 'any tale or conversation from the barracks which' she 'might chance to hear,' and in the result it is at least as much a picture of the soldier's life in India as it is of rural life in England in that day. And as such the book has still its interest and charm for us of a later generation.

It may be objected that the layers of Church Catechism—as explained from a vigorous Calvinist point of view—are very thick, and the layers of story very thin; but the little scenes which introduce each section of the task, and lure one with such simple ingenuity from point to point, are so delicately and charmingly delineated, with such a genial, kindly pen and humorous observance of human nature, and the Indian colouring is given with such skilful touches, that the long disquisitions of 'Mrs. Browne' and little Mary's somewhat priggish inquiries and prodigious knowledge of texts cannot really drown the delightfulness of the book. We are in very deed in 'Indy,' as they called it in those days; we buy 'all manner of Europe things' at the 'Europe shop'; we reckon time by 'parade'; we hasten to be in barracks before the 'evening drum beating'; we rise 'before gun-fire' and drive into the country 'with a convenient hackery and bullocks,' and our way takes us through 'the very heart of the great bazaar,' where 'the streets are full of drunkards, reeling home from their midnight revels; fierce and bold women quarrelling with their neighbours; naked children screaming and fighting; miserable infants crying; dogs barking; bells tingling from the pagodas; tum-tums; horns; creaking wheels; men beating their cattle; wicked cursings and oaths; cries of beggars; groans of the sick; with confusion and every kind of evil work.'

We would defy Mrs. Steele herself to give us a more vivid description than this of the surging life and indescribable clamour of the native quarter in a Mussulman town—albeit the spectacles through which she gazes at them may be of a different tint !

We are admitted also behind the scenes of the soldier's life in India, as life goes in the privates' quarters ; we see the petty feuds and rivalries, the fierce temptations and demoralising influences that beset Tommy Atkins, and still more Mrs. Tommy Atkins, at such a station as Cawnpore. Drink and extravagance are two enemies for ever lying in wait for them. Even the children do not escape. Little Mary and Tommy go to John Dawson's birthday party, at which the *putully nautch* is the great attraction. They walk there hand in hand, dressed in their best and 'as proud as you can think.' And how do they come home again, alas, alas ? Hand in hand still, they roll into the 'drain which carried off the water from the bungalow,' and there they are lying when their respective parents come to fetch them home.

"Why, here is Mary and Tommy, I declare !" said Mrs. Mills, "both in the ditch !"

'As Sergeant Mills lifted Mary out of the ditch, he said, "Wife, I will never meddle between you and Mary again."'

We are shown, too, some of the golden opportunities for self-sacrificing kindness which a life in barracks gives—opportunities of which the All-seeing Eye alone knows how many are turned to account by kind, motherly hearts that have not forgotten the lessons they learnt in Sunday School in England long ago. Mrs. James, who has done Mrs. Browne as bad a turn as she could, falls very ill from the effects of dissipation, with a 'strong fever.' Mrs. Browne goes to nurse her and never leaves her till she dies, 'except to change her clothes,' and all the sleep she gets is 'in her chair by the bedside.'

Whether the young Marys and Tommys of his Majesty's 53rd regiment altogether appreciated the lifelike portraits of their parents and guardians which the paymaster's wife drew for their edification may be open to question. But they are long since in their graves, and the quick brain and eager hand that observed and sketched them have followed them into the land of shadows. And, if she noticed all their weaknesses, and did not spare their vices, it was with no sort of malice or unkindness or the faintest mercenary desire to make 'copy'

out of them. She laboured early and late for their souls. She taught their children living, and visited them dying; and acted a true mother's part towards many a helpless orphan.

The best known episode of Mrs. Sherwood's life in India is that which is connected with Henry Martyn, the saint and scholar, the translator of the Bible into Persian and Hindostanee. During the greater part of Martyn's time in India, while he was an East India Company's chaplain to the troops, he was stationed at Dinapore and Cawnpore, and was very closely associated with the Sherwoods. He becomes one of the principal figures in her book; and the vivid and striking pictures which she draws of him, preaching, studying, moving to and fro, with his wonderful luminous look and his spare, student's figure, are a priceless addition to the stores of our knowledge of one of the most beautiful and Christlike characters that the world has yet seen.

Mrs. Sherwood's descriptions of Henry Martyn have, however, been often quoted, so that there is no need to do more than refer to them here. Her own and her husband's intimacy with this 'beloved friend,' and with the good Bishop Corrie and his sister, made the chief joy and glory of their lives in India, and were among the most treasured recollections which they brought back to England when at length the time came to return home.

Of striking episodes and historical events Mrs. Sherwood's life contains few or none. The history of India was busy making, of course, all through the years she lived there, but just at that period, for a wonder, it was making quietly and without so much of the turmoil and bloodshed which mark the greater part of its course. An expedition against the Ghoorkas, under General Gillespie, during 1809-10, was the only episode of fighting for the 53rd during that sojourn of the regiment in India. On this expedition the paymaster went, and extracts from his clever letters tell the tale of the petty war.

Mrs. Sherwood's peculiar gift lay in the power and distinctness of her apprehension of life, not as seen in its thrilling, startling aspects, but on the broad, quiet current of its everyday flow. She saw life vividly. She had a keen eye for the picturesqueness of daily life—for its constant unconscious symbolism—for the way in which it half conceals, half reveals the infinite. It is to this gift that her pages owe their charm and her tales their originality.

I might give many extracts from her autobiography to illustrate this, but must be content to choose one only, which shows, I think, exactly wherein her genius lies.

The Sherwoods were on their final voyage down the Ganges, on their way to embark for home. Scene after scene was gliding past their vision, all beautiful but all saddened and made dangerous by the miasma-laden air—the ‘damp heat’ of the Ganges valley. ‘In this unhealthy spot,’ writes Mrs. Sherwood, ‘my infant was taken alarmingly ill; and it was whilst fearing for her life we came to anchor one evening in a jungle covered with flowering shrubs, amidst which I discovered a small white tomb, an infant’s tomb, over which stood a lofty palm tree. This tree had, no doubt, been wounded too deeply for its sap. It was in a dying state; its beautiful crown had fallen and hung on one side of the still upright stem, the vast leaves were turned quite black, and drooped like the sable plumes of the hearse, and a more striking emblem of death and of funereal pomp nature could surely nowhere supply. When the front of our budgerow touched this point I thought of Pompey, who, when the beak of his ship pointed to a tomb on the shores of Africa, was much troubled at the omen, and ordered that the vessel should be passed on a little further.’

MARY E. PALGRAVE.

THE INVASION OF PODDLEBY COMMON.

COLONEL and Mrs. Jagford lived in the cosiest nest of a house close to the Common, from which, in fact, they were separated only by their garden fence.

‘And, by Jove, it’s as good as a private park to us!’ the Colonel would say to his intimate friends.

Indeed the Jagfords loved that Common with a great and tender love. They knew its richest patches of moss and all the hidden haunts of its rarest wild flowers. They were proud (with a pride more delicate and ethereal than that of actual ownership) of its picturesque clumps of venerable cherry-trees, of its great stretches of gorse, of its groups of mighty beeches. And they had a warm affection even for its myriad bushes of holly and whin, and its tangled mazes of thorn and briar, vocal, in early summer, with the song of the nightingale and thrush, and, in late autumn, with the ditty of the robin.

Did you but know Poddleby Common, you would not wonder at their enthusiasm. It is one of the most delicious bits of unenclosed land in the kingdom. For it stands high and its surface presents an endless variety, from widths of level sward to steep declivities and sudden dips into verdant craters, the chalk holes of a bygone age, with here and there a yawning chalk-quarry of to-day, dazzling white in the sunshine amid the browns and purples and greens. Its turf is as perfect as English turf, close-cropped by sheep for hundreds of years, alone can be. Its pure air is as the elixir of life to the work-worn city man, whose head, aching from confinement within close gas-reeking offices, shall be fanned by its beneficent and balmy wings.

‘The Common, my dear, is always charming,’ was Mrs. Jagford’s rejoinder to a lady friend’s outburst of admiration one day, early in the spring, when each bud was gemmed with a dewdrop iridescent and sparkling, and uprose hundreds of larks

—a sea of melody—from the grass and the heather, up to the azure sky.

So it is ! whether later on in spring, when the gorse is ablaze beneath the milk white bloom of the cherry ; or on summer days, when the mellow sunshine kisses the emerald turf of its tableland, or plays hide-and-seek with the shadows in its green hollows, or 'mid the labyrinths of its luxuriant thickets ; or in late autumn, when the cherry-trees shall have donned their scarlet coats, among the yellows and buffs of the beeches, and when, on the horizon, the distant woods shall show dimly, through haze like the bloom on a plum, a blur of purple and russet, while overhead is a sea of dappled cloudlets of the softest grey, with islets of such tender and delicate blue, as autumn alone can boast, and over all the sober glory of the autumnal sun ; or in mid-winter, when the great sweep of the downs stands clearly cut against the sky, and every withered frond of bracken and blade of grass and twig of tree shall have been sheathed in mail of bluish-white from the armoury of the hoar-frost.

At certain seasons of the fine weather (yet not often, because of the remoteness from towns) a wave of cheap-trippers would inundate this fairyland, leaving behind it a high-water mark of broken bottles, jam-bedaubed scraps of paper, and shreds of orange-peel.

Now the Colonel and his wife were the most tender-hearted and charitable people, and theoretically they deemed it an excellent thing that the toilers of great cities should have opportunities of seeing green fields and breathing country air.

But the truth is that such visitations were a pain and a grief to them, even when the boys of the party abstained from throwing stones at their poultry and tame pigeons and stealing their fruit. The coarse merriment, the rough romping and horse-play, the loud, unmelodious voices jarred upon their sensitive taste much as the performance of Punch and Judy amid the grey ruins of some hoary abbey would have done. In fine, it was little short, in their eyes, of desecrating the Common.

So, while the orgies lasted, they never stirred out of doors—save that the Colonel would occasionally prowls round his premises, ostentatiously cracking a dog-whip, to the discouragement of would-be depredators—but wrote their foreign letters and mounted their water-colour sketches (mainly of the Common) in dignified seclusion.

Little did they dream of a still greater sorrow which was being nursed for them on the knees of Fate !

One exquisite April morning the Colonel suddenly started up from the breakfast-table, upsetting his coffee over his rasher, and bounded to the window.

‘God bless my soul, Martha, what’s that ?’

Mrs. Jagford, divided between fears of an earthquake or a water-spout, timidly peeped over her husband’s shoulder.

‘There ! at the foot of the slope ! A gang of idiots hacking away at the gorse ! What the plague—— ? Don’t wait for me, dear ; I must see to it, and at once.’

And off went the Colonel, like a rocket, blazing with wrath.

The men saw him coming and an uneasy grin overspread their stolid faces. They stood stock still, with sickle and mattock suspended, watching him as he tore down the hill towards them.

‘I told ye, mates, ez how the kernel ud be bloomin’ mad !’ said Jack Thribble, in awestruck tones.

‘What the—dickens—are you—fellows about ?’ gasped the Colonel, when within earshot.

Bill Sant, foreman of the gang, sheepishly recognising the responsibilities of office, slouched forward and touched his forelock deferentially.

‘Scuse *me*, kernel, but we be a tacklin’ o’ this ere job by hexpress horders o’ the Squoire hisself.’

The Colonel’s bushy eye-brows met in a dark frown.

‘Sims sorter pity too, it du,’ continued Sant diplomatically, glancing at the havoc already wrought, ‘but, seein’ ez how Squoire be Laud o’ the manner——’

But the Colonel cut him short with an angry wave of the hand, and, turning on his heel, strode off home.

Now Squire Jellton and the Colonel had known each other for many years, during far the greater part of which they had been the firmest of friends ; but, being both quick-tempered men, they had had occasional tiffs ; and it so happened that, at this very time, a coolness had arisen between them on the vexed question of Bimetallism, which neither of them understood, but as to which, nevertheless, each of them entertained strong though not identical views.

On reaching home the Colonel threw himself in gloomy silence into an easy-chair by the fire. Mrs. Jagford, being that incomparable jewel, a woman of sense, refrained from

irritating questions. She knew that she had but to wait. For her husband was not the kind of man whose confidences had to be pumped out of him. They gushed out of themselves, in due time, like water at the bursting of a dam.

So she quietly placed a cup of hot coffee on a small table at his elbow, and, ere she withdrew her ministering hand, the Colonel's had closed over it with a loving pressure more eloquent than words, and forthwith his taciturnity departed from him.

'What do you think, Martha, that blatant owl, Jellton, has been and done?'

'I haven't the ghost of an idea, Tom.'

'Why, the venerable ass' (Squire Jellton was fifty, and the Colonel's junior by six months) 'has actually, at his age, got bitten by this ridiculous golf craze! I heard a hint of it the other day but did not believe it. Besides, I didn't want to vex you unnecessarily.'

'But, my dear Tom, what on earth does it matter to me?'

'Wait a bit, little woman! Why, it is he that has set these fiends at work! He is going to sacrifice our beautiful Common to that infernal Scotch game! He'll cut down our gorse and fern and tear our dog-roses and wild clematis up by the roots, and grub up our hyacinths and primroses——'

'Oh, Tom!' wailed his wife. "Could you not go to him and explain what it means to all who love the Common? It is too dreadful!"

Her consternation was sweet to his sore heart. But his craving for sympathy was yet unslaked, and he went on—

'No more quiet walks for you and me, Martha, with those confounded golf balls whizzing round! I'm told that, if they hit you, they hurt like the very deuce; and they're hard enough to cut your head open. And the worst of it is they'll be flying wildly all over the place, for that besotted ape, Jellton, and his fellow-apes won't be able to hit straight for years. They'll frighten away all the nightingales and——'

But Mrs. Jagford had dissolved into tears.

The Colonel, to comfort her, hastily gulped down his coffee and asked for another cup. Moreover, he begged, in assumed tones of ravenous hunger, for a slice of the cold ham, a dish which his wife invariably carved herself, with a skill which had become a household word.

By common consent they dismissed the hateful subject and

took their morning stroll well away from the spot where the destroyers were at their fell work.

But, though they resolutely shunned the topic, the impending change lay heavy on their hearts. As time went on it seemed odd to them that they met with such scant sympathy from their neighbours, even those of them who might have been expected to feel the profanation of the Common most keenly.

For instance, that sentimental spinster, Miss Harpingale, who had sent numerous sonnets on its beauties to the Parish Magazine, had broached views on golf which sounded rankly inconsistent from her lips, in the ears of the Colonel and his wife.

‘You see, Mrs. Jagford, it will introduce some liveliness into the place.’

Pretty well this from the authoress of the following apostrophe:—

‘Oh, Poddleby ! sequestered from the world,
A port wherein the sails of life are furled !
I love thee for thy peace’

—lines which the Colonel promptly quoted.

By she was quite unabashed, and ran on—

‘They say, Colonel, that fifteen new members joined yesterday, and that the links will be among the best inland links in the country. And, only think, Mrs. Jagford, there are to be special teeing-grounds for ladies. Besides, Lord Carbox has accepted the presidency of the club, and will shortly drive his four-in-hand here with a distinguished party from Muchfleet Castle !’

‘I wonder,’ said Mrs. Jagford, as the meagre form of Miss Harpingale disappeared through the garden gate, ‘how a woman that could write such poetry should be so callous !’

‘Poetry !’ snorted the colonel, ‘doggerel I call it. Her heart was not in it, my dear !’

The fact is they were both very bitter in those days.

They felt that—

‘Among the faithless, faithful only they.’

One day Mrs. Jagford bethought her that she had not, for some time, seen anything of a great favourite of hers among the cottagers living on the skirts of the Common, one Mrs. Cogg,

who, with her husband, a comparative nonentity, kept a cosy little tavern, embowered in roses and wistaria, some half a mile away.

So, taking advantage of a sunshiny morning, she left the Colonel to his letters and sallied forth. As she got into sight of the little place, she was struck by the change in its usual surroundings. Groups of men of a higher class than its usual frequenters were lounging on the benches before the door, and one man, in a red coat, was swinging a wand to and fro above a particular spot, as though engaged in some form of incantation, while the rest were crooning in a banshee-like wail the monosyllable 'Four!' (as it seemed to her), which she took to be a mysterious mode of counting a mysterious something, perhaps the wavings of the wand. For it began to be borne in upon her that these people were, in some occult way, playing golf. And it struck her as being very poor fun.

Presently she descried a small boy, with an elongated brown bag swung across his person, and giving him somewhat of the appearance of an insect with a pin stuck through it, who was making towards her.

In him she recognised a Sunday-school pupil.

'Well, Johnnie,' said she affably, 'what can I do for you?'

'Please'm the gemmleum's compliments, and, if not inconvenient, would yer mind goin' a leetle more to the left?'

'Yer see, mum,' pursued Johnnie apologetically, trotting by Mrs. Jagford's side (who was tingling with the novel sensation of being ordered out of the way on her native heath) 'the gents, they did sing out at yer, but yer didn't seem to twig, not nohow, an' Muster Corpin, 'e be just a goin' to droive, an' 'e du droive powerful 'ard 'e du ——'

But Mrs. Jagford was now out of earshot.

Her feelings were mingled. Indignation strove for the mastery and kept it awhile.

So it was to *her*—to her who had known and loved the Common long before golf thereon was ever dreamed of—that their idiotic chant had been addressed!

Thought she in her wrath, 'A nice way of addressing a lady!'

But soon the comic side of the position worked itself uppermost.

'What a ninny I must have looked, being driven out of the way by Johnnie Fagg, like a stray cow!'

By this time the knot of men had threaded itself out along the course in twos and threes, like beads on a string, leaving her destination free.

As she approached the house, she noted its unusually spick-and-span appearance. Its doors and windows had been newly painted, and over the door was a board bearing the legend, 'Poddleby Golf Club House,' in gold letters on a chocolate ground.

She found Mrs. Cogg arrayed in a neat new gown and clean apron, beaming like a harvest moon at having to provide lunch for gentry in lieu of drawing pots of beer for Tim, ploughman, and Hobbs, shepherd.

For the life of her Mrs. Jagford could not keep her vexation at the changed order of things out of her greeting.

'Good morning, Mrs. Cogg. So you too have gone over to the side of the enemy who are spoiling our Common !'

Mrs. Cogg's round, merry face instantly assumed a look of concern as she carefully dusted a chair for her visitor with the tail of her apron.

'Sorry from my 'eart I be that it worrits yer, mem ! But I won't deny but wot Coggs and me is gainers by it. For 'twould ill become me to say aught agin wot brings we butter to our bread in a manner o' speakin'.'

'True,' assented the lady reluctantly.

'Not,' continued Mrs. Coggs, in a burst of candour, which somewhat consoled her caller—'not but wot I du think this 'ere golfin' the biggest tomfoolery for growed men has hever I seed ! Baby silliness I calls hit, a worritin' an' a terrifyin' they little balls into 'oles. But, Lor bless yer, mem, wot's the odds so long has they're 'appy ?'

'Aye !' chimed in a croaking voice from the chimney-corner, where Mrs. Cogg's mother, a grim old crone, generally regarded as 'queer-loike,' was engaged in what appeared to Mrs. Jagford a mystic and uncanny rite—to wit, polishing the steel heads of a cleek and lofter. 'Aye ! an' keeps their tongues from evil speakin'. Why, 'twas honly 'tother day I wor out on Common arter firin', an' I heerd Meajor Hogg, (wich 'e be hold enuff to know better), a cussin' an' a sweerin' summit horful hat a hinnercent bit o' fuzz-bush, an' 'im a father o' bearded men, wi leetle 'nuff 'air hof 'is own on the pate of 'im !'

Mrs. Cogg's eyes twinkled.

'Losh, mother, tain't real sweerin', not the meajor's!'

And she turned to her guest,

'Dessay, mem, some hon hem lets hout a wicked word now and agen. But, lor, hall on hus does that! But 'tis this way wi' the meajor. I've heerd the young gents a jokin' among theyselves loike, ez how the meajor, when things is goin' contrairy, gets perliter and perliter. 'Twould mek yer larf the way them young fellers takes 'im hoff! 'Tis good has a play! An' I'll lay, when mother heerd 'im, 'twor summat loike this: "O, yer bootiful bush! O, yer noice ball! Now, yer sweet ball, doăn't ye be a-showin' wheer yer bin an' 'idden yer-self, not on no haccount! I much prefers to stay 'ere hall day a 'hunting of yer, I du!'"'

And Mrs. Cogg broke into a merry trill of laughter, in which Mrs. Jagford, who knew the major to be one of the most lovable of men, could not help joining.

Old Mrs. Garnet did not at all relish the discounting of her anecdote. Who does? 'Sims to me,' she retorted waspishly, 'as 'tis a sight wuss nor reel, 'onest sweering! 'Tis sorter tryin' to cheat the Halmighty, to spit out good words when yer means bad. Bill Jakes hisself'll stand a better chance in the judgment nor sich as them!'

As Bill Jakes's profanity was a byword of three parishes, Mrs. Cogg deemed it advisable to change the subject.

'As I wor a sayin', mem, wot if this 'ere golfin' be down-roight nonsense, has in coorse it be, still it do bring grist to the mill o' sich as we. Now there's Cogs and two hother men has gits summat for lookin' harter they greens. Then there's the boys has carries the sticks. That 'ere mite, Johnnie Fagg, now, 'eve bin and bought hisself a new weskit an' a pair o' boots halready! An' there be hothers loike 'un. So let the gentry amoose theyselves, say I. Hit keeps hem hout o' mischief, an' 'tis better nor cock-fightin' anyhow. An' hif some poor folks be the better for it, now toimes be so bad, 'tis summat anyway!'

Mrs. Jagford had some food for thought as she walked homeward through the sweet summer air.

After all, there were some aspects of golf not wholly abhorrent. Ought not the help it brought some of the poor cottagers to outweigh any little disfigurement of the Common or any shock to sentiment?

Just then a group of golfers came into view on the brow of

the eminence opposite. She heard the distant sound of their light-hearted merriment and the musical click of the balls as they were sped on their way from the highest teeing-ground of the links. Their evident enjoyment of the game was infectious, and she confessed to herself that their appreciation of the Common might possibly vie with her own, though it was of a different nature and took a different form.

Some way further on she came suddenly upon another group. They were standing stock still, not because there was a party in front of them, but simply because they had paused in their game to admire the exquisite beauty of the scene before them. It happened that the spot was a great favourite of hers, and, herself unseen, she listened with the keenest pleasure to their comments, which were enthusiastic and full of insight. Indeed, one of the golfers pointed out to his companions beauties to which even she herself had hitherto been blind.

On reaching home she detected a slight embarrassment in her husband's manner. 'Poor fellow!' ran her mental note upon it, 'he's broken another of my old plates and doesn't like to tell me.'

But it was not old china that weighed on the Colonel's mind.

'Jellton has been here, Martha, and we've made it up about the Bimetallism.'

'Oh, Tom! I'm so glad!'

'Yes, he found he was wrong; not that I was quite right either, it seems.'

But Mrs. Jagford saw clearly that the Colonel had more to tell.

He fidgeted about and coughed in a shamefaced away.

'Fact is, Martha,' he blurted out at length, 'the villain talked me over into going to see the links with him, and 'pon my life, do you know, I'm almost inclined to think it's not quite such rot as we thought, after all.'

His wife stood open-eyed, but not nearly so horrified as he had anticipated.

This encouraged him to further confessions.

'In short—well, he wheedled me into trying his new driver, as they call it. And, would you believe it, I got the ball well over quarry, road and all, first shot! Jellton vowed it was the finest drive he had seen from that particular spot. And,' added the colonel, with a boyish blush on his bronzed countenance, —'ahem! the truth is I've let him put my name down as a candidate for membership of the club.'

'Oh, Tom !' gasped Mrs. Jagford, sitting down abruptly with a stunned expression.

'Yes. And I tell you what ; you'll have to join too. Lots of ladies have joined ; and I say, Martha, what jolly games you and I'll have together, living close to the links as we do !'

The Squire did not give his convert time for backsliding. That very afternoon he carried off the colonel to the nearest town to buy clubs. And that warrior pursued the game with the energy of a proselyte. Ere long Mrs. Jagford found herself discoursing learnedly to her lady friends on the merits and demerits of 'high tees' and the intricacies of approach shots, and was delighted to discover that she could give Miss Harpingle a point a hole.

And there came a memorable day when the following inscription was posted on the wall of the Poddleby Golf Club Room :—

'Silver medal (Handicap Competition)—Colonel Jagford, 104—25=79.'

It was one of the proudest days of Mrs. Jagford's life.

R. PARDEPP.

AN ENGLISH GIRL'S LIFE IN PENANG.

'GOING to Penang?' vaguely. 'Where is Penang? Is it in India? Oh, wait a minute; I know. Isn't it one of those dreadful places where you turn black by degrees, and dress in feathers and necklaces?'

These encouraging remarks, and others of a similar nature, were what I had to listen to daily, I might almost say hourly, when the fact became known amongst relations and friends that my future home, after my approaching marriage, was to be in some remote corner of the gorgeous East.

I, myself, was little better informed, though I did indeed just glean the fact—very important at the moment—that my trousseau must consist of the lightest of garments, and that all my preconceived ideas as to the locality of the Straits Settlement were absolutely at fault.

Now, therefore, that I have braved the perils of thirty days upon the deep—have surmounted the well-known evils of the Bay of Biscay—been rendered almost speechless (and it takes no light thing to bring me to that pass) by the scorching suffocation of the Red Sea—and finally been turned head over heels out of my berth by the frisky monsoon in the Indian Ocean—in short, now that I am actually living and moving and having my being in a little dusky bungalow, not three miles from the town of Penang itself, I cannot but feel that it is my positive duty to lose no time in informing all whom it may concern under what sort of conditions an English girl finds herself in this far-off, mysterious, and strangely fascinating land.

Having offered thus much by way of apology, I will proceed without further delay to describe how one day is spent, which may be regarded as a fair sample of how every ordinary day is spent in this particular quarter of the East.

'Mem?'

'Yes. What o'clock is it?'

'Quarter to six. Mem having bath?'

For the benefit of my readers I translate the above, which is spoken in Malay—a language the rudiments of which I am struggling, not unsuccessfully, to master.

The clock on my dressing-table points to the above-mentioned hour, and my little black ayah, who rejoices in the name of Yarneegi, is staying outside the bedroom door, which opens on to the verandah that runs round our tiny bungalow. In the East, as we all know, or ought to know, there is practically no daybreak ; wherefore inasmuch as half an hour ago I was peering into blackness, and wondering what hour of midnight or early morning it might chance to be, now, within the space of twenty minutes, the sun has risen, the room is bathed in light, and the long, hot, tropical day has begun.

Early tea out here is an institution, not to be partaken of in bed, or bedroom, as at home. Oh dear no. We step out on to the verandah, brilliantly attired in gaudy wrappers whose colours suit the brilliant sunshine (for here all things are bright, fantastic, and transparent, and no mixture jars upon the Eastern eye) ; consequently I feel that the Japanese garment purchased at Colombo on the voyage out is exactly correct for the occasion.

Very tempting, moreover, looks the dainty little table spread with tea, toast, and 'piscenys' which form the substance of this daily morning meal.

In the space of half an hour I have managed to consume a very creditable amount of the same, and, fortified thereby, have been hooked into my bicycling garments by the willing Yarneegi, who regards all the proceeding of the 'mem' with undisguised admiration, while in the meantime the impassive Ah Boy (our Chinese manservant), who in his double capacity of butler and valet yet deigns to superintend and even to approve my movements, has blown up my wheel, and now stands guard over it, preparatory to the appearance of his mistress upon the scene.

It is a quarter to seven, and my husband has seen fit to betake himself off to the centre of the working world in Penang, in search of the daily crust of bread ; so that for the ensuing eight hours I may be—though truth to tell I am not always, still I *may* be, and it sounds pathetic and picturesque to say so—dependent upon such company as my own thoughts can provide.

At any rate I am so, for the first portion of the day ; and

thus alone I mount my metal steed and wheel slowly from the porch.

The air is heavy with the fresh, sweet scent of the early morning, and a cool breeze blows softly in my face as I start from the bungalow door. A sharp turn to the left takes me past the Residency, and along the front of the big Hospital, where recline on the verandah the outstretched forms of weary inmates, who gaze down from beneath the drawn-up 'chicks,' and let the refreshing breeze fan their fevered limbs.

Then comes the Gaol; and beyond it are the main roads leading to the actual town of Penang. Away towards it I spin, through divers little Malay villages, with the tiny, plump, brown children laughing and pointing as I pass, whilst their elders seem no less amused at the appearance of a 'Kitchie Mem' (or 'Little Mistress,' as I not infrequently hear myself styled) on a bicycle.

(N.B.—I am not a *very* tall person, but it pains me to have had this so soon found out.)

Then on past rows of filthy Kling huts, such as the well-brought-up young pigs in England would grunt their disapproval off; past gaudy, obtrusive Chinese dwelling-houses, and more tasteful, if less picturesque, European ones, and so on, along the palm-shaded roads into the streets of Penang itself. Very few white people are about as yet, but the native element is seen and heard in all its glory.

Endless bullock-carts are moving slowly along the road; here and there the rickshaws are actively running across the street in happy ignorance of all 'rules of the road,' and blissfully unconscious, or unheeding, of the repeated ringing of my bell. Nearly everywhere are little English children with fair hair and waxen faces, being escorted out for their necessary 'constitutional' by their several ayahs and bearers. Most of these small folk (they are all under eight years of age, so have not yet been sent home) are my familiar friends; wherefore the sound of my bell is the general signal for the *cortège* to halt whilst greetings and salutes are interchanged.

Leaving these behind I wheel round by the Town Hall standing locked and deserted, whose closed doors put an effectual check on my intention of stealing a march on the librarian, and bearing home a supply of newly-arrived books and magazines.

Foiled in this attempt, I make for the Esplanade, where I

dismount for a mouthful of salt sea-air and a glance at some of the huge boats at anchor in the harbour.

I could linger here for an almost indefinite period ; but the sun is gaining strength every minute, and my watch tells me that it is high time that all wise and health-respecting females should get within the shelter of their bungalows.

Accordingly, despite the fact that I have on a sun-hat, the proportions of which would strike dismay into the bosom of a Bond Street milliner, I turn homewards again, lingering in the shady places and making hasty rushes wherever the roads are laid bare beneath the blazing heavens.

Along the side of the Racecourse my way lies now ; and past it and the Golf Links I fly—yet it does not escape my observation that on this latter territory there are to be espied dotted here and there the forms of various little imps of wickedness, who in the safe assurance of the early hour are calmly playing a round with the best clubs their masters possess ! And by the way, the caddies here, as at home, are first-class golfers, though their chances of play are limited to these surreptitious rounds at break of day.

A few minutes more, and at last I am turning in at our own compound, hot and hungry, and ready for the cold plunge that—oh joy !—awaits me.

Our baths, by the same token, have become famous in Penang, where the customary ablutions are performed through the medium of a large jar of water, and a bucket to dip in, for the purpose of pouring the water over one's person, and therefore it is with pride that I record the fact that *our* baths are built of stone, and are over six feet in length, by three feet in width, and four feet in depth.

We pin our faith upon these baths. We revert to them carelessly in conversation. We despise a bungalow which can only boast of one bath, and piques itself on that. *We* have two—ahem !

Added to this, they are so large, so commodious. It is my habit to slide carefully on to the top of mine and there lie at ease ; quite aware, but happily oblivious of the fact that below the surface there congregate in large numbers the ubiquitous reptiles and insects that are always *en evidence* in the East. I did, through inadvertence, put my foot to the bottom one morning, but since then have carefully avoided doing so, for very excellent reasons of my own.

By this time breakfast is waiting in our small dining-room, whither I adjourn, if not 'a giant refreshed,' at any rate an English girl very much refreshed and invigorated, clad in a pink and white wrapper of flowing propensities. Solemnly I take my seat beneath the slowly moving punkah, which seems to be wafted by invisible hands, so regular and rhythmic is its motion. (It is with a certain feeling of disillusionment that, looking round the corner, I catch a glimpse of the very substantial figure of our dirty old 'Kabun' (native gardener) squatting and snoring on the verandah, as in his dreams he yet retains the cord between his fingers and pulls mechanically.) One lingers long over meals in the tropics, being loth to leave the cool current of air that ceases as you rise from the table. Besides, by this time, the still, steady, penetrating heat has begun to steal over and around, and through every person and every place.

One would fain do nothing—but it is the Outward Mail day, and every working hour of that day is precious. Therefore, at the risk of dissolving into a spot of grease upon my desk, I betake myself to the coolest corner of the verandah, and there proceed to cover as many sheets of notepaper as are compatible with the conditions of climate and the limits of the postal regulations.

With the thermometer standing at 90° in the shade letter-writing resolves itself into a series of peculiar feelings—in fact, a short note has the effect of reducing the strongest frame to jelly, whilst a regular letter is in itself a complete Turkish bath. It may therefore be taken for granted that my physical and mental condition is not normal after a couple of hours spent at the writing-table. However, the approach of the in-coming mail from home acts as a tonic, and even as I write the sudden sound of a gun proclaims the fact that the P. and O. has arrived, and another couple of hours will see us in possession of the longed for—oh, you at home don't know how much longed for—budget.

One o'clock, and I rise up weak and weary, but very ready for the mid-day lunch; when a large tumbler of iced 'squash' revives my failing faculties as by magic.

And here a word as to food may not be amiss. Never have I seen or tasted such a variety of fruit as is placed on the table at every meal. My first introduction to the snow-white 'mangusteen' in its case of scarlet and purple was in itself a

revelation ; and when this was followed by the delicious, curiously flavoured 'rambutan' and 'duku,' I felt that verily here was compensation for the hard, tasteless slices of beef and mutton which in Penang are only distinguished by name from blocks of wood.

The only resemblance to the fruit seen on an English dinner-table are the pineapples and plantains ; and I must own that the artificially raised, hothouse specimens at home, are much more highly flavoured than the 'garden produce' of the East.

But if the meat is tough and tasteless, the occasional dishes of snipe that grace our table are all that the most fastidious palate could desire. We revel in our snipe ; and it is something to have a husband who is also a 'shot,' when there is a snipe marsh within hail ; but alas ! one day renders the birds 'gamey,' and each hour after that is spent in preventing them by force from escaping bodily out of the meat-safe.

And the vegetables are poor and flavourless, and seem to lack all nourishing virtues.

Indeed it would be hard to grow fat in a land where even the cows and hens fail to look anything but skinny and meagre, so dry and coarse are the grazing grounds and farm-yard runs.

In contrast, however, the fish, when it can be procured fresh from the boats for breakfast, is excellent. But let those who insist upon trying to keep it for dinner remember that they do so at their peril, for by that time it has become both unpalatable and impossible.

Meantime luncheon is being concluded, and for the next two hours there is peace in the dwellings of Penang. No sound is heard ; no face is visible ; the 'chicks' are drawn down ; and the afternoon hours of sleep has arrived.

Only the sun sleeps not, and after tossing from side to side on my couch in vain endeavours to get cool, I have recourse to outward assistance. An irrepressible wail is responded to by little Yarneegi, who comes in armed with a fan of gigantic dimensions, which she proceeds to manipulate with extraordinary dexterity over my recumbent form. The result is satisfactory : I sleep soundly and peacefully ; and once more have to remind myself that I am *not* a 'giant refreshed,' at waking.

Tea at four-thirty is usually accompanied by callers, and it

takes the best part of two hours to dispense with both, at the end of which time I hear buggy wheels approaching, and know that it is John rattling along behind the reeking 'Worrit.' The 'Worrit' is our pony. He has a wicked and triumphant twinkle in his eye which tells me what sort of a time he has been having on the way up from the town. Consequently he is handed over to one of the 'syces' to be walked up and down till his spirits are subdued; whilst our other little animal—a gay, light-hearted creature of a friendly and family nature—is put into the cart, and we start out for the long, cool drive that makes one forget the heat and discomfort of the day.

The Waterfall Gardens is our destination; and the road to them is beneath green arches and along by the Chinese Temple, whose bells are 'a-calling' as we pass.

At the Gardens we leave the buggy, and wander about amongst the masses of tropical plants, and round by the silent pools where the lotus blossoms are asleep. On all sides the jungle hills rise up—dark, forbidding, impenetrable.

I wrote these verses there one day :—

THE WATERFALL GARDENS, PENANG.*

There is calm along the level lawn the roller has released,
But there's mystery and magic in the gardens of the East.

There's a sound through all the silence of a thousand unseen
things—
In the sunlight there's a glimmer of a million gaudy wings.

There's a pathway where the bamboo canes are swaying over-
head—
And a carpet of the petals that the 'forest flame' has shed.

There, behind the moving branches, is the full, ripe mangusteen,
Where the scarlet creeper round the tank is winding through the
green.

There, the myriad tumbling waterfalls are bubbling their content
And the heavy air is laden with a subtle, slumbrous scent.

There, entangled in the quiet pools, from out their watery bed
The tender-tinted lotus-flowers reveal their white and red.

All around the jungle rises, where man's foot has never been—
Is it there that I shall see the things that no man's eye has seen?

Is it there within the foldings of this dim, secretive land
I shall hear the Eastern visions, and shall learn to understand?

* Reprinted from the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

Twilight has drawn on, though it is not more than half-past six o'clock ; it is time to light the lamps, and leave the fireflies and all the mysterious enchantments of this beautiful spot, the paradise of Penang. With the twilight comes silence, and we drive swiftly home, past the little cemetery, where the ' Southern Cross ' hanging in the starlit sky seems to act as sentry over the bodies of the quiet dead at sleep below.

This is an ordinary, eventless day of my life. It has, of course, its gayer hours—indeed, a good many gayer hours ; we have balls, dinners, mountain excursions, all sorts of small dissipations to vary our monotony—but when nothing happens and nothing is expected to happen, the quiet hours from sunrise to sunset often and often pass exactly as I have here described them.

OLIVE MONTAGU KINDERSLEY.

THE STRONG GOD CIRCUMSTANCE.

BY HELEN SHIPTON, AUTHOR OF 'THE HERONS,' 'DAGMAR,' ETC.

BOOK I.

'OF THE THREE KALENDARS.'

CHAPTER VII.

THE THIRD ONE-EYED KALENDAR.

'Old, unhappy, far-off things,
And tales of long ago.'

IT had been with a sudden lightness of heart, as though he had heard some good news on his own account, that Arthur realised that his eyes had indeed deceived him. But curiosity remained unsatisfied ; and on the first opportunity he asked Lesley who was the young man whom he had seen with her at the farmyard gate.

'That was my cousin, Valentine Elliot,' she said.

'Does he live in Ashden ?'

'No ; he lodges up at Hare Edge. His father and mother are dead. I daresay you may have seen him before, for he has got work at the new reservoir.'

'No,' said Arthur. 'I have not seen him—there. Some of them take great care to keep out of my way ; and perhaps he is one of those.'

'Very likely. I wish—it would be a good thing if you could get to be friends with him, Mr. Kenyon. He has hardly any friends but those that are beneath him in every way ; and it isn't altogether his fault either.'

'I will try what I can do,' said Arthur quietly, and asked no more questions. The likeness to Redmond Vaughan was too strong to be accidental, and he did not want to force the girl to give him any hint of the story that probably accounted for it ; though it was most likely no secret to her. Or so he accounted

to himself for the feeling that made him drop the subject, and made him also contemplate the possibility of making friends with this young fellow less favourably than usual.

He was glad, very glad, that Vaughan was out of it; but somehow the thought of Lesley talking so earnestly with her handsome cousin—the recollection of the interest in her face as she spoke of him—fretted him somewhat every time it recurred to his memory.

‘If any man confided to me such a state of mind, I should say that he was beginning to fall in love with the girl, and to be inanely jealous of every one she happened to speak to,’ said Arthur to himself, with a little laugh at the crudity of the statement. ‘That shows how hastily and superficially one would judge in another’s case; the fact being that in an unnaturally quiet life small interests assume undue proportions, and all of us always wonder what a woman can see in another man! I shall make it my business to find out what this tragical-looking hero is like. It is possible he may be destined to solve the problem of what is to become of pretty Lesley when she gets tired of the loneliness of Cross Rigg.’

It was not difficult, now that Arthur was on the look-out for him, to get a sight of Valentine Elliot upon the embankment, working as hard as any, but always with that indefinable air of a gentleman doing the thing for his own pleasure—his coat lying a little way off upon the grass, guarded by a sandy little mongrel dog, with one blind eye and one that was keen and pathetic enough for two.

But it was impossible to get any talk with him, and indeed, whatever he might be like mentally, he was outwardly too different from the rest to be approached in the same way. Arthur felt that he must know more about him before making up his mind how to cultivate an acquaintance.

There was a certain old woman (the widow of a very small farmer—hardly more than a day-labourer) with whom Arthur had already made friends, quite as much for his own gratification as at the call of duty. She was a keen, clever old body, with plenty of good sense and a great command of racy language, who in another rank of life would have been leader of a *salon*, and who in her present position was a power among her own people and the repository of all the ‘annals of the poor’—by no means so short or so simple as many people are apt to suppose.

From her Arthur had already heard many interesting tales, excellently told, in a style only rendered a little obscure by an inveterate dislike to the use of the names of persons or places—persons not previously mentioned being always introduced as ‘he’ or ‘she,’ and places distinguished by a jerk of the thumb and alluded to as ‘over moor’ or ‘down yonder.’ Also it was difficult to make out whether she was speaking of those now living, or of generations past and gone, but setting aside these trifling difficulties, her conversation was a literary treat; and from her Arthur hoped to hear, without hurting any one’s feelings, something of the history of Valentine Elliot.

And this is the story that Arthur heard from her, rendered into somewhat less vigorous Saxon so as to make it more acceptable to ears polite.

‘There was a lass that came of decent folks in this parish, and she was brought to disgrace by old Squire Vaughan, grandfather to *this* one. A bad one he was; and old enough to know better, too! Well, she died, poor wench! when her child was born, and the child—it was a lass too—was brought up by her father and mother. Bonny-looking she was, such a one as her poor mother had been, but with a spice of the devil in her. Well, it’s like mother, like daughter, they say, and before she was twenty folks began to talk that she was going the same road that her mother had before her. But she was not one to sit down with her shame as poor Mary Valentine did. She up and she went to old Gideon Elliot, there at Cross Rigg, and told him that his son had proffered her marriage and now wanted to be off of his bargain. And the old chap—he was always set in his ways and one that couldn’t abide loose goings on—he called up his son and faced him with her, and the lad couldn’t deny it. So Gideon swore that since he’d given his word he should wed her, and wed they were, and went to live at that lone house on the road to Castleford. But she’d the worst of the bargain, as the women mostly do. Young Elliot was a bad lot, and I doubt he wouldn’t have made her a good husband if he’d married her with his good will; and as it was he made a right-down bad one. And she—she thought a deal more of him than it’s well to think of any man, and when he cast up to her what she’d done—and what her mother was—she laid it to heart. When the baby came she called him Valentine, after her mother’s folks, but he featured the Vaughans as if he’d been born on purpose to keep her in

mind of her mother's shame. And what with the lonesomeness and one thing and another, one night, when she'd had words with her husband, she got some ratsbane and gave it to the baby, and took a dose herself, poor lass ! and made an end of it.'

'But the child did not die ?' said Arthur.

'No ; he was living yet when the neighbours found them, and they pulled him round. "Shame's grace," they say, and there was never much grace about young Elliot ; but he didn't show his face about these parts afterwards, and I've heard he went across the sea and died somewhere over yonder. Old Gideon took the child and brought him up, and a handful he had with him. When he was sixteen he took himself up to Hare Edge and worked for old Anthony, and now he's down on the new works ; and if there's a bit of mischief stirring anywhere, you're sure he'll be in it. But I don't know that he's a bad lad neither, that young Valentine. I never could abide his father, nor yet his grandfather, but he's a deal more like his poor mother.'

The story was in many respects much what Arthur had expected to hear ; but it was even more tragic. What to do for this young fellow, who must needs be at war with all his world, it was not easy to guess ; but the task of making friends with him was attractive in proportion to its difficulty.

If only he would be sent 'abroad'—that universal refuge for men whose corners are too square for the rounded holes of England ! Arthur knew perfectly well that people had wondered why he himself did not 'go abroad,' and knew, too, that disgrace at home does not always supply the necessary stimulus. He smiled a little cynically to himself. 'It is possible the young fellow knows his own business best, and has his reasons for staying here, and that the sadness in his face mirrors the tragedy of his mother's life and has no relation to his own feelings. Here, again, if I were diagnosing my own case, I might say that I wished to send him abroad simply to get him out of the way of his beautiful cousin. What fools we are !'

That night Redmond Vaughan came round by Cross Rigg on starting for one of his nocturnal expeditions, and tapping at Arthur's door found him just putting away his books in preparation for a midnight walk. They set out together, and

Redmond proceeded to state what he had come for, with a sort of boyish elation.

'I want you to come and have dinner with me,' he said. 'You know my cousin, Miss Carroll, and her friend are there, and it has just struck me that it must be dull for them—that if they were staying at another house they might often be seeing people. We were quite lively in the evenings when Tom Egerton was there, but of course he's gone now. Won't you come and help to make it less dull for them?'

'You are very good,' said Arthur, easily and evasively. 'But when I came here I retired from the world, and my classes take up most of my evenings.'

'But I want you to come,' said the other, and paused. He was not used to being thwarted; but he really hardly knew how to give or to press an invitation, never having done such a thing before.

And Arthur was thinking. Of course he had retired from the world. He *had* been very fond once of ladies' society—unusually so for a man who had so many other interests; but what could he have to say now to such girls as these? Whether they knew or did not know his story, whether they understood or failed to understand his present attitude to the world, it would be equally painful in either case.

But all this was reckoning without that perpetual consultation of himself in the case of Lesley Sherwin, which seemed to be carried on involuntarily in some out-of-the-way corner of his mind.

'It is just the obvious thing for a ruined man to do—to fall in love with a woman beneath his own natural rank in life. So sweet and idyllic, too!—to find consolation in humility, to offer her a name that he would have thought too good for her before he tarnished it! . . . Heaven knows, it is little enough to me *what* the world may hear or think of me; but if I wanted to bear out all that my enemies have said, I could find no better way than that. . . . And there is nothing in it, either. If I were meeting other women, my interest in her would be as harmless as my interest in Widow Gregory's equally remarkable personality. . . . I will go to Lassington and meet these girls, and, whether pleasant or unpleasant, a little of the old-time style of thing will drive some of these morbid fancies out of my head.'

It was easy to give Redmond Vaughan to understand that

his invitation was accepted after all. The day and hour were fixed and then they parted. Arthur went home to bed, having learned a very little wisdom from experience ; and Redmond made a *détour* and came back to his own woods, on the Lassington side of the hills, above the growing embankment.

The new waterworks had been a cause of very serious annoyance to the owner of Lassington ; and if he had had the power to prevent their being undertaken, I fear he would have exercised it. Castleford was not sufficiently real to him for its need of a better water supply to appeal to his feelings ; and he did intensely dislike the idea of a number of strangers marauding through his woods by day or night.

If he could have carried a gun he would have been a keen sportsman, as all his forefathers had been, and if he could not shoot his own game he was at any rate determined that no one should touch it without his leave. Only as a matter of courtesy, and because his father had always allowed it, did he permit some of his county neighbours to take a day or two in the season on his land, and for the rest his efforts were directed not to keeping up any head of game, but to preserving all the wild creatures alike from disturbance. It had cost him much trouble to teach his keepers that kestrel and jay, polecat and hedgehog, were to have fair play with rabbit, partridge, and pheasant ; but he was a young man who expected his own way and generally got it.

And as he was not unpopular among his own tenants, and as they looked with great jealousy and dislike upon the navy invasion, he was likely to have their assistance in maintaining the privacy of his covers.

There was one person who ought, he felt, to have been on his side, and who appeared to have enrolled himself upon the other, and of him Redmond Vaughan was thinking as he strode through the dusky, shadowy woodland ways, whose every turn he knew so well.

It sometimes seems as though a thought conjured up its object. Redmond guessed who it was who approached, directly his quick ear caught the sound of a footstep on the leaf-strewn path, before even a little grey dog ran up to him, silently like a ghost, and as silently sped back to its master's side.

'Good evening,' said Redmond curtly, as a dark figure of just his own height and size emerged from the dusk before him, and answered his greeting with one as brief.

'I was wanting to speak to you,' he went on. 'If we had not met here I was coming up to old Anthony's to see whether you were lodging there still.'

'But for all that you are not best pleased to meet with me—at any rate, not with Snip.'

The tone could not be called insolent, simply because there was no consciousness of insolence in it. It was too entirely the tone of an equal.

'I don't mind his being here with you. I know you can keep him in order. But I've given you fair warning—if he's found in the woods without you I'll have him shot. That wasn't what I wanted to say.'

'Well, what then?'

'Why did you take up with this work here on the embankment? You know I hate it, and it'll do you no good with the farmers.'

'As long as I want nothing of you, it's nothing to me *what* you hate, and I wanted to be doing something fresh.'

Again, the words that might have seemed uncivil, quarrel-provoking, were robbed of any unpleasant significance by their frank tone.

'I don't know why I have patience with you,' said Redmond Vaughan, somewhat impatiently. 'You know that this work won't last, and then you'll be stranded. And if you want something fresh, you know what I offered you.'

'I know. And I believe you meant it kindly. But I don't want to leave this country.'

They had been facing one another almost defiantly, in the soft darkness that was not quite impervious to eyes so well used to it. Redmond moved a step nearer and laid his hand on the other's shoulder; and his voice took the tone that is never so persuasive as when it is heard in one more accustomed to command than to persuade.

'Valentine, once more I beg of you to let me pay a part of the debt that my family owes to you.'

'I know you'd like to do it. But it can't be paid—by you nor by any other man, though you did your best once, and I don't forget it. Of all men in the world you are the one that I'd rather not take a favour from.'

'A favour!' echoed Redmond, but paused at that. He too knew that the old debt could not be paid, and that what his pride would have liked would have been to load with favours

this young fellow whom at times he could almost have hated. But the other had a pride too, the very counterpart of his own, and even more watchful and suspicious.

Redmond tried with his foot the strength of a mossy stump beside the path, and seemed absorbed in finding out how far it was decayed.

'I don't know what is to be the end of it,' he said at last, musingly.

'You let me alone and I'll let you alone,' answered the other promptly. 'We've been good friends so far, and we might well be bitter enemies. The less we have to do with each other the better.'

'That may be so. But you've taken part with these men—I hear already that you're a sort of leader among them, and of course your notions as to game laws and landed property and the rest are congenial enough to them. I knew there would be trouble with them directly I heard they were to be brought into this neighbourhood, before I knew that you were going to help to stir up strife. But I give you fair warning that I am not going to give in. I shall stand up for my rights, as my fathers did before me. It's not decent that I should do *you* harm in any way, legal or otherwise; but how can I fight them and spare you, if you will make yourself their leader?'

'I don't want you to spare me,' said Valentine Elliot sharply. 'Nay, if I were a gentleman I suppose I should understand what it is that makes you loth to hurt me. Maybe I do understand as it is. But God knows I could wish you didn't feel it so. If we were back in the old times, and could fight it out, as Ashden and Lassington did once, that might be the best way out of the mess for both of us.'

'You forget. I should have been no fighter,' said Redmond Vaughan, with a thrill in his deep tones. 'But, half a man though I am, I have other weapons if you drive me to use them.'

'I ask your pardon. If I had been a gentleman I suppose I shouldn't have said that. I was a beast, any way.'

There was no answer, but Redmond did not turn away, as a superior might naturally cut short a disagreeable conversation. These two seemed to have come to an agreement to bear the utmost, each from the other.

'There ought to be the breadth of England betwixt us,' said Valentine Elliot after a moment. 'But I don't choose to go,

either ; and if I were to dare you to drive me away it would make no odds. What can I do ? These chaps know that I don't hold with the game laws ; they know that I'll never believe that one man has a right to bar another out of these moors and woods any more than out of his share of the wind that blows across them. I can't turn round and tell them different, just because we're friends—more especially as God knows we're not.'

He laughed shortly, as one that sees the ludicrous side of a strange tangle of perplexity ; and Redmond's voice had an echo of the same grim amusement.

'We are not friends, but it seems to be impossible that we should let each other alone. It is impossible too that I should be your enemy, and you are too much of a man to shelter any doings of yours behind that. It's a queer state of things. What do you propose to do with it ?'

'The Lord knows—and maybe the devil.'

There was a silence for a moment. The low breeze whispered through the sleeping coppice ; and the little grey dog, who had been lying by his master's feet, rose and stretched himself as if thinking it time to be moving on.

'Look you,' said Valentine Elliot at last, in the tone of one proposing a treaty, 'I'll do this much. I'll tell them that you mean to stand by what you call your rights, and that if they mean to stand by theirs they must fight fair.'

'What do you mean by that ?'

'Why, if I've anything to do with it, there shall be no sneaking in and out of covers, and dodging the keepers, and picking up a bird here and a rabbit there, on the sly. I've thought it no shame to do that as long as I was but one against several, but now there'll be many against a few, and I'll help none of them to do as I have done. But if they like to go like men, and take what I believe they've as good a right to as anybody else, I'll lead them. But I'll let you know we're coming, and if you like to have the soldiers up to stop us you can.'

'Well,' answered Redmond soberly, as if considering this remarkable proposal without any surprise. 'And you may let them know from me that I shall put on a couple of extra watches at once, and summons every man that I catch trespassing. I don't grudge the trouble of fighting *them*, but as for you—I wish I could *make* you do what's best for yourself.'

‘But you can’t; and I doubt no one could. Well, good-night.’

‘Good-night,’ answered the other, and they passed each other and each went his way, grey shadows among the many shadows of the woodland.

Redmond Vaughan’s tutor, the Rev. Alwyne Porter, had been a good man, and also a man of books rather than of the world. Both those facts had gone for a good deal in making the young fellow what he was.

When Mr. Porter arrived upon the scene Redmond was nearly fourteen, and his mother’s inconceivable folly had already had results that would never be undone. The boy had formed his habits, and he was very self-willed—it seemed to be a choice between giving way to him in some particulars and alienating him altogether. Rightly or wrongly, Mr. Porter gave way, and allowed his pupil to study at his own hours, and take his exercise by night rather than by day; and being himself one of those men who naturally fall into the ungainly habits of the recluse, he very soon ceased to realise how very different their mode of life was from that of the rest of the world. He would in any circumstances have burned a good deal of midnight oil, and have come down rather later in the morning than his conscience approved. When Redmond went out at night he went on with his own studies, and gladly prolonged them till he heard the lad come in again. Then, with a feeling of having discharged his responsibilities, he went to bed and slept on into the day—always with the feeling that these were mere temporary arrangements, and quite forgetting that they were the mould into which a young life was being poured.

One summer morning, realising at last that it *was* morning, and that his pupil had not yet returned, the good man set out to look for him, and found him eventually in desperate combat with a lad of his own age and size.

The combat was so unequal that Mr. Porter interfered with a high hand to stop it, in spite of certain general theories as to the fighting instinct in young male animals. But never did he clearly make out what the battle was about, though a spectator of the fray whom he never saw—a frightened, sobbing, dark-eyed girl who was crouching behind a hedge—could perhaps have enlightened him.

Gratitude from his pupil he had not expected and did not

get ; but Redmond's wrath smouldered longer than might have been expected from his general disposition. And two facts in connection with this incident impressed themselves upon Mr. Porter's mind with sufficient vividness to cause him to make further inquiries. One was the remarkable likeness between the 'opposing party' and his pupil, and the other the dismay and remorse manifested by the former when he found out—what the excitement of the moment had prevented him from perceiving earlier—the inequality of the battle in which he had been engaged.

Mr. Porter would not have expected to find such knightly feeling in a peasant lad—at least not to find him capable of expressing it ; and his wonder quickened his desire to find out whether this boy had any right to the handsome and somewhat peculiar features of the Vaughans.

It did not take him long to find some one who could tell him the story that Arthur Kenyon heard later from old Widow Gregory ; and as he brooded over it this good-hearted, unworldly recluse began to reflect that his charge was growing up into a man ; and that his life, however unlike that of other men, would not be exempt from their temptations.

It seemed good to him to tell the young fellow the story of his grandfather's sin, and all that had come and was still coming of it. He told it well, too, with all the eloquence of a simple, God-fearing man, who saw in this only another instance of the working of certain world-old laws, of whose existence he had not failed to teach his pupil earlier.

And something in the lad's own heart supplied the details that the good man had never heard and would not have repeated ; he was far enough from feeling about it as he had represented himself to Arthur as feeling about the possible tragedy and crime that haunted Cross Rigg. *This* was different—this sin was living still—the harm that had been done was in the world yet. He felt that he would be the basest of men if ever he forgot this story—if ever he used the power committed to him for evil and not for good. And there and then he faced as he thought the facts of life, and made resolves that might cost him more in the keeping than he dreamed at present, and that yet with such a character as his were like a wall of adamant on the right hand and on the left, keeping his will in the path that he had laid down for it.

To be *bon roi* here in this world where he had been given so

much power ; to do some good and no harm ; never to buy, or even to sue for, what would never be given to him freely ; to live a life that, since it could never be like that of other men, should be as different from theirs as possible ; never to whine over what could not be helped ; and to hope and trust to be given another chance, somewhere or somehow, in place of this that had been spoiled from the beginning.

Such was the boyish ideal that Redmond Vaughan set before himself when he first began to think, and six or eight years had not modified it greatly. Mr. Porter, as far as he comprehended it, perhaps thought it not an unsatisfactory result of his teaching ; and since he went away no one had ever come sufficiently near to Redmond to affect his views in any way ; nor did his scientific studies seem to him to have any bearing upon that other side of his existence.

As his mother's mental health obviously failed, a kind of pity replaced that shrinking from her that he had felt as a child ; but his life continued to run in the grooves into which she had driven it.

Redmond took his affairs into his own hands as soon as he came of age, his tutor having conscientiously prepared him to do so ; and he held the reins with firmness and skill, as every Vaughan had done before him since the family first emerged from obscurity.

Only one person ever openly crossed his will, and that was Valentine Elliot. The young men seemed fated to come across one another, ever since that summer morning long ago when Lesley Sherwin had met with Redmond in the dewy fields, and had taken him at first for her cousin, and then at the sight of his face had recoiled with a look that he never forgot. What it meant was sheer surprise, and a doubt whether this was not indeed Valentine—bewitched ! but to the boy it looked like that horror of his disfigurement that he had always seen in his own mother's eyes.

The true Valentine had come hastily upon the scene while Redmond was making a shy attempt to reassure the frightened child, and a misunderstanding had led to that fight to which Mr. Porter presently put an end. He put an end to it in a deeper sense by the story he afterwards told to Redmond ; but his pupil ever after took an uneasy interest in the other lad. On many a summer morning Redmond, himself unseen, watched Lesley Sherwin ; and sometimes he saw her cousin

with her. As he grew older he recognised her beauty plainly enough, and saw too that *he* recognised it, that other young fellow, who was himself as he might have been.

Well, all things considered, the old squire's grandson could not have lifted a finger to take from Mary Valentine's son the woman he loved, even if it had been likely that any true woman could turn from that face and form to what Redmond saw on the rare occasions when he looked in the glass. And Redmond had never even thought himself in love with Lesley—she was only another 'might have been.'

But he and Valentine could never ignore one another from the day when the latter, with stammering eloquence, intreated Redmond's pardon for fighting him.

The time even came when Valentine, though against his will, had to accept the help of his wealthier 'cousin,' for soon after the former had broken loose from his grandfather's control, and had hired himself out to work for a miserly old farmer on 'the moor edge' he fell ill with a violent attack of fever. Redmond found him, early one autumn morning, shivering and barely conscious by the roadside, having been turned out by his employer with injunctions to betake himself to the Union infirmary; and having no notion in his dazed mind of what he meant to do, save that he would die in a ditch sooner than pass the workhouse door.

The young owner of Lassington had little difficulty in finding him a shelter, and was not likely to feel the expense of paying his charges there until he was able to work again; but Redmond did more than mere decency required. He visited Valentine every night while his illness lasted, and gave him personal service and tendance, with a boyish frankness that was particularly gracious in one who never forgot that he was 'monarch of all he surveyed.'

To be indebted to the young squire went sorely against the grain with Valentine, but since the only alternatives would have been to be indebted to his grandfather—which he would have liked still less—or to have been carried to the workhouse, or to have died in a ditch, he could not but feel a sort of intense and surly gratitude.

It did not prevent him from having his own opinions, which opposed those of the other young man upon every point, or from being suspected, as he grew older, of being the most successful night poacher in three parishes.

Certainly Redmond was always meeting him under suspicious circumstances, but hitherto they had never come into open collision, and they had often a good deal to say to one another when they met. They had a great many subjects in common, especially the night aspects of nature and the habits of beast and bird and insect; and they had never yet made up their minds whether they hated each other or not.

CHAPTER VIII.

AT THE GATE.

'This good God—what He could do if He would !
Would if He could—then must have done long since.
If so, when, where, and how? some way must be.
Once feel about, and soon or late you hit
Some sense in which it might be, after all !
Why not "The Way, the Truth, the Life" ?'

R. Browning.

VANESSA and her friend certainly ought to have been very dull in those dull autumn days, when the equinoctial gales began to wake and howl around the old hall, and their solitude *à deux* was only enlivened by an occasional visit to Mrs. Vaughan, who might or might not remember who they were, or a stiff call from one of the very few families in the neighbourhood who were aware that Sir Francis Carroll's daughter was staying at Lassington. But Vanessa would not own to being bored, did not seem in fact to feel so. She said that no society at all was the greatest possible change that she could have, and that a lodge in a vast wilderness, and unlimited opportunities for study, was a concatenation that was never likely to occur again in her life and must be made the most of.

Winifred Marlowe had a most attentive and enthusiastic pupil, especially in any branch of natural science, and did not inquire too closely as to how much of the interest was due to those evening discussions that all three seemed to enjoy.

All day they lived as Beauty did in the palace of the Beast, surrounded by tokens of Redmond Vaughan's care for their comfort and amusement, but never seeing him. Always when they came in the drawing-room before dinner he was there waiting for them, ready with a sort of boyish simplicity to take

up their last conversation exactly where it had been dropped, and keen to know what they had been doing, and report any discoveries of his own.

Miss Marlowe, as many another plain, generous-minded girl has done, had taken up a motherly attitude towards her companions, and studied them both with some anxiety.

Vane was no coquette, she thought, to wish to win this man's heart just because she had won so many already. Romantic boys had apostrophised her as cruel before now; but on the whole she had been too honest, too free from bad intent, to have done any real harm. But there was no denying that men were very apt to be in love with her, and if this young man went the way of all the rest he would probably not find it possible to get over it as they had had to do. But could Vanessa prevent his falling in love; or ought she to think seriously of the danger to him? To leave Lassington would be a strong measure, considering Sir Francis's expressed wish that his daughter should stay there—was there really any reason why her friend should advise her to do so? Winifred thought that she would keep her eyes open, and thought too that no one knew the symptoms of an impending passion better than Vanessa, and that she was quite to be trusted to be wise in time.

As for that nice boy, the Rev. Thomas Egerton, he of course had succumbed at once, but as it appeared from his ingenuous confidences that Vanessa was far from being the first, it seemed reasonable to hope, when he departed at the end of his fortnight, that she would not be the last; and the trio settled down very comfortably without him. But about ten days after he had left, when the two girls came into the drawing-room, they were startled by the apparition of a slim, tall clerical figure standing upon the hearthrug and talking eagerly with Redmond Vaughan. But that was not Mr. Egerton's round boyish face that was turned as they entered. Winifred caught her breath as she recognised Arthur Kenyon, and remembered where she had seen him last. Happily he was not likely to remember her; but it was like seeing a man who had been through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, one looked at him furtively and wondered if he bore marks of fiendish claws, or the sword of Apollyon.

On the whole he was not much altered. He had still that look of more than average vitality which his slenderness and

pallor had always only seemed to accentuate. And he was very genuinely absorbed in his new work, full of the humours of navvies and their quaint modes of speech and ways of life, and as much excited about some of his schemes for them as though no larger schemes lay in ruins behind him. He did not bore them with his ideas, because he was too brilliant and vivacious a talker to become a bore, even if he had talked, as Matthew Arnold did upon one memorable occasion, about *cheese*. But he took them all into his confidence, and Redmond, whose scheme of life included a good deal of autocratic benevolence, partly sympathised with and partly differed violently from him; while the two girls, neither of them knowing anything about the matter, took up their dainty feminine weapons now on this side and now on that.

It was an interesting discussion, and might have had more result if the four friendly combatants had had an inch of common ground to stand upon. As it was, there was no fear that they would convert one another, and the matter would soon have dropped but for the audacious ingenuity with which Arthur twisted a confession of sympathy with some of his schemes into a promise of help in carrying them out.

Female influence was everything with these rough spirits, he pleaded, and how could those who really valued education for themselves miss such an opportunity of extending it to others? If Miss Carroll and Miss Marlowe would be as good as their word, and give their most valuable aid, the numbers at the night classes might be trebled, and a centre of sweetness and light might be formed, the influence of which would not be limited to the five hundred men employed on Ashden Reservoir.

He was in earnest, though he laughed; and the girls looked at each other. Vanessa thought that Winifred would like it, and reflected that for her sake her friend had given up for the time many such interests. For herself, she had had too much power over men all her life not to contemplate with cheerfulness the prospect of wielding a little more, even over navvies; and to Winifred's active mind a suggestion of more work would not in any case have been unwelcome, while it seemed to her if Arthur Kenyon had the heart to care about any such scheme it would be cruel not to encourage him.

No one was bold enough to suggest that Redmond should be one of the volunteers who were to revolutionise the minds of the Ashden navvies; but somehow it was understood that

since he was always about at night there would be no difficulty in finding an escort for the ladies to and from the valley on the nights when the classes were to be held. Vanessa said something about thinking the matter over, and not having promised, also about never having learnt anything herself, far less had any experience in teaching. But Arthur swept them off their feet with his flattering conviction of their power and willingness to do all that he wanted; and the understanding remained that by the following week he was to be prepared with more books and more scholars—as many as his temporary schoolroom would hold—and that his coadjutors were not to disappoint him.

And then he took Miss Marlowe's breath away by turning upon her with a smiling reminder of the time and place where they had met last.

'I never had an introduction to you,' he said, 'but I knew your friends the Powells very well. How proud and pleased they were at your success! Do you know what has become of Arnold Powell, the second son?'

Winifred hardly knew what she answered, but he went on to inquire after their mutual acquaintance at the University, and to remind her of some of the quaint doings of her brilliant and eccentric friends the Powells, and of old times generally, until she longed to cry out to him to spare himself. It was like seeing a man deliberately torture himself for pride, while wondering uneasily how long flesh and blood would stand it.

Escape came in an unlooked-for fashion, for an hour before the evening would naturally have come to an end the butler appeared and announced that 'a person' was inquiring for Mr. Kenyon.

Arthur went out, and came back in a moment saying that he had been sent for to the huts—a man had been hurt that afternoon, it seemed, and they thought he was dying. His adieux were brief, but managed to imply that he felt himself to have secured most valuable assistance, and that for his own part he was looking forward eagerly to the next class-night. Winifred recognised the manner of which she used to hear a good deal, and wondered how much of it could really mean anything *now*; but on the whole she admired the courage of a man who could still pretend to care.

Redmond said good-night to the ladies, and went off with his guest, feeling, perhaps, that it was time to begin his day's

work. But when he got outside he did not resume his search for the larva of the *Strangalia armata*, though he had not yet succeeded in finding that interesting tree borer. He walked up towards the huts with Arthur, and wished to know whether Mr. Kenyon really desired the redistribution of land.

It was a point on which Arthur, like many a landless scion of the landed gentry nowadays, did not very well know his own mind.

He could state and appreciate the Socialist's point of view as to land in general, and even sympathise with him in his most exaggerated phases ; but he could not honestly say that he wished to see his brother Robert's estate broken up into small holdings, still less that he himself should wish to break it up if ever it should come into his hands. So he did not feel himself capable of convincing a man like Redmond Vaughan, who knew, as if of his own personal recollection, how and when every farm and field on the estate had come into the possession of his family, and who knew and clung to every acre of it like a peasant proprietor to his own small holding. Arthur only wondered that he should care enough about the opposite view to inquire anything about it, not having yet heard of those crude and forcibly expressed opinions that made Valentine Elliot unpopular among his social superiors.

They parted at the head of the new, much-trampled road that led down to the works, Redmond asking to be told if any help was needed by the man or his family ; and Arthur turned to where through the dim moonlight the whitewashed walls and felt roofs of the huts showed in two long lines, white below and black above.

A small, silent group of men gathered outside indicated to Arthur the hut where he was needed. The door stood partly open, and he tapped softly and went in.

A smoky paraffin lamp burned on the low mantelshelf and showed a small room that seemed full of people. An old woman was moving about, and came to meet Arthur with a voluble account of the accident, and while she was rapidly explaining how a truck loaded with earth had slipped down the bank and caught 'him yonder' against another truck, and how he'd walked home after a bit, and they hadn't thought there was much amiss until they had got him to bed—Arthur was glancing round upon the company and considering who ought to be sent away.

Two women stood by the door, talking in gusty whispers, and by the fire sat a young woman with a baby in her arms, and a little child asleep on the floor beside her. Behind the door sat a big lad, in a huddled, disconsolate attitude.

The injured man was lying on an old-fashioned wooden bedstead, from which the upper part of the four tall posts had been roughly hewn. His eyes were shut, and his hands and teeth clenched, and he breathed hard and deep, each breath almost a groan.

He was a young man, largely and grandly made, and as he lay there, naked to the waist, the dim light from above showing the huge muscles upon his chest and arms, he was like some mighty tortured figure from the chisel of Michel Agnolo.

The only person of the little crowd in the room who seemed to be of any use was a young man who knelt by the head of the bed, wiping now and then the dew of agony from the poor fellow's forehead, muttering a brief word of encouragement, or lending his strong arm to help the restless, pain-thwarted movements. He turned his head, and again it seemed to Arthur that his fancy had played him a trick. He had parted with Redmond Vaughan up there on the hill, but surely here he was!—his voice mellowed by the sympathetic provincial *timbre*, his dark eyes soft with pity.

'If he and this double of his were one, what a man they would make!' thought Arthur whimsically, even while he moved forward to help Valentine Elliot to lift the patient into an easier position.

'Has the doctor been here yet?' he asked softly.

'Yes; he's only just left. He's going to send up something to ease the pain, but——'

The young man stopped short, and Arthur was somehow not surprised that he did not go on to blurt out the truth in the plain-spoken fashion with which his brief cottage experience had already made him familiar.

And before either had time to speak again the dying man's eyes flashed wide and turned from one to the other with an appeal like that of some dumb creature in uncomprehended agony.

'I doubt I'm done for, sir,' he said in a hoarse gasping whisper, and Arthur's quick ear caught that same appeal in the tone of the blunt, brief utterance.

Once before, years ago, he had met with it, put then, in some rough, confused fashion, into words, on the lips of a young fellow at college, swept at an hour's notice, in the first flush of youth and strength, out of the only world he had ever thought or cared about.

A pang that he had hardly time to realise went through Arthur's heart as he remembered the unreasoning, uncompromising schoolboyish faith with which he had then in a measure stayed and comforted that simple soul—a faith that he had hardly known was there till he found it in time of need. Where was it now? What had he found, on the long dark road that he had travelled since, to offer to this poor soul going out into the dark? What, after all, was he here for?

A moment's terrible pause, and then there came to his aid a sudden reaction—a touch of noble shame. 'I did not *know* then—I only hoped, in the sunshine,' he thought. 'Shall I not hope now, under a cloud? What am I, that because I have come to grief in this world I should see no chance for this poor fellow in all the infinite possibilities of worlds to come?'

His cool, strong hand met the great knotted, callous one that went wandering and clutching over the bed, and held it close in a firm sustaining clasp; his keen blue eyes met that dim appealing glance with a look in which soul seemed to meet soul; and Arthur Kenyon spoke as it was given him to speak. He had none of the technical phraseology that is sometimes a help and sometimes a hindrance at such times; he had to find words for thoughts that had never come to him personally before, however common they might be in some men's experience; and even though the thoughts were far from clear, he knew that the words must be clear and simple indeed to reach those senses blurred by pain and all unused to spiritual impressions.

He never knew what he said then, what strong, blunt phrases seemed best to voice that crying for the light that knew literally no language but a cry. His whole soul was absorbed in the effort to get inside this other soul—half-awakened, all but inarticulate—to call with its voice, to look with its dim eyes along the dark unknown way, to stretch 'lame hands of faith and prayer' for both of them. It seemed to him that in a measure he did what he was striving for, as the man's rough voice, broken with long gasps for breath,

faltered its unvarnished tale of coarse sins, hardly known for what they were even now—of vague regret—of vaguer yearning for another chance, somewhere and somehow.

Splendid animal that the poor fellow was, fierce longings shook him for the rough delights that he was leaving behind—for half-drunken revels and battle with his peers; fierce jealousy of the man who sooner or later would surely console his young wife and father his fatherless babe.

And then, again, something like a cold touch out of the dark would thrill him with dim fears of the unknown, and make him turn to Arthur with a pathetic trust that the scholar and parson would be able to 'say something,' to give him some glimpse of light; with faint spiritual yearnings that vanished almost as they came, under the stress of pain and the fire of passion.

Was it worth while to have come through the furnace in order to be there to help this poor soul through the Valley of the Shadow? Some men would have asked themselves that question even then, and have answered that all sleep as soundly in the end, helped or unhelped! But not Arthur Kenyon. He did what he was there to do, and for the time at any rate it seemed to him that he had not paid too dearly for the power to do it.

It was over at last, the night that had seemed so endless. The tide of death had crept up till it had swamped all consciousness and recollection, and the death-struggle that had yet to come was merely physical. Arthur rose from his knees and looked confusedly round, worn with the strain of that long vigil; and Valentine Elliot touched him on the arm.

'You'd better come away now,' he said gently. 'The old women'll do all that any one can do for him now, and they're better used to this sort of thing than you.'

The lamp was almost out, and the late grey dawn was just perceptible in the glimmering square of the low window. Some compassionate neighbour had led away the young wife and her children, and the lad behind the door had fallen fast asleep in his chair. The old woman had been joined by another, and they stood there, grim and patient and untiring, two homely cottage Fates, used alike to welcome the newborn, or to watch by the dying, or to shroud the dead.

Out of the heavy atmosphere of the low-browed hut the two young men stepped into the fresh, cold air of the early morn-

ing. Arthur shivered, half unconsciously, as he looked round upon the pale, clear sky with the leafless branches of the hedgerow trees sharply outlined against it. His companion looked keenly at him, stepped quickly back into the hut, and brought out the overcoat which he had thrown into a corner when he had arrived the night before and had not thought of since. Arthur suffered himself to be helped into it, still with thoughts far away; and then something in the other's manner, a touch of gentleness, almost of reverence, recalled his attention to the present.

He had wanted to make friends with Valentine Elliot; and now, with his practised perceptions, he knew that the thing was done, though he could hardly guess how or why. There was nothing new to him in the admiration of men somewhat younger than himself; but this was something more than the incense to which he had been so well accustomed. Whether he had been able to hold the gate open for the poor benighted soul which had so soon to pass through it who could say?—but certainly to Valentine Elliot it seemed that this man by sheer strength of soul and kindly purpose had that night pushed aside one leaf of that awful portal, and had looked within.

'*He knows,*' said the young man to himself bluntly. 'There's a lot of them that talk; but this one *knows*! And it's much to meet with one that does, whatever comes of it.'

'What are you going to do now,' asked Arthur quietly, after another long look round at the world that was just coming awake.

'Get to work,' answered Valentine Elliot as quietly.

'Without any rest, or any breakfast? Surely that isn't necessary?'

'I don't know that I care. And I shall be late getting to it as it is.'

'Nonsense! That's not the way to do a good day's work, as I know only too well. I'll just speak to the clerk of the works, if you'll allow me, and make it all right with him; and then I shall be glad if you will come up to Cross Rigg with me. I want to hear something more about that poor fellow in there.'

'Well——' said Valentine; and Arthur was sufficiently familiar with the dialect by this time to know that the word, with its long-drawn intonation, meant assent and thanks and a good many things beside.

Together they turned towards the little office, where the usual occupant was just unlocking the door, beginning his work with the brief November day. He was a pleasant-faced, middle-aged man with the manner of one used to give as well as to take orders. He had something to say about the accident of the day before ; and while he was saying it a dog-cart was seen coming up the lonely lane, part of which was visible from where they stood.

A vehicle of any kind was something of a rarity on that road, and Arthur and his companion both paused to watch it—with that dreamy curiosity which survives a sleepless night and deeper emotions—as it turned out of the lane and down the rough new-made track towards the place where they were standing.

The driver was a countryman, and beside him sat a young man very differently dressed, and muffled in an overcoat the like of which had never been seen in that valley before.

As the dog-cart stopped before the ramshackle little building he sprang nimbly out, with an exclamation, apparently of somewhat profane thankfulness, that died strangled upon his tongue. His eyes had rested upon Arthur's face, and they remained wide open, and his mouth also, with a look from which a kind of embarrassed dismay had banished all other expression.

As for Arthur, it would have been hard to say what more unwelcome apparition could have arisen to trouble him than this ghost out of his former life : Tom Waterlow, the passive partner in that coalition of two whose action had done most to bring about his disgrace and ruin. It had not often been his lot to be in doubt what to do, but at this moment no course seemed best—to greet this young man as an old acquaintance, or to defy him as a foe, or to turn from him without a word, seemed equally inadequate and impossible.

Habit is, after all, nearly the strongest thing in the world. Arthur Kenyon's 'Good morning, Waterlow,' though it came after a brief pause, was almost precisely in the same tone in which he would have spoken in the old days, in the very improbable event of meeting the young man thus early in the college quad. And Tom Waterlow's hand took off his bowler without any conscious volition on his part, and his 'Good-morning, sir,' had almost the old accent of one rather grateful for the courteous greeting.

(To be continued.)

FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW.

The Fascination of the Unknown. AFTER all there is something refreshing and stimulating in starting fresh. The thirty-first of December may be extraordinarily like the first of January, but nevertheless there is a radical difference. There is no real reason why we should not start fresh on the sixth of November or any other day. But the beginning of a new year startles one into remembering that new opportunities for doing things undone lie ahead. Fresh, clean, piled-up sheets of paper always have had a fascination for me. They are so unsoiled, and it is so odd to think of all that will be written on them before they reach destruction or die of sheer old age years hence, faded and yellow, treasured in some forgotten corner of somebody's desk. And the unsoiled days of a new year suggest all sorts of possibilities. Most of them will die out of memory; a few of them will be picked out and treasured, or put away in the secret drawers of one's memory as days that were hard and full of grief. 'Some of my days,' wrote a poet, 'I take up lovingly, and live through again. I see the dear dead eyes looking at me out of the mists, I can hear the whisper in my ear when my better love told me that she would walk beside me, and I can feel the thrill that vibrated up to the skies when I first knew myself a man.' Most of the days in the New Year will be commonplace, and be merged in one big memory. But there will be some that will be put away to be taken out and looked at when the next century has dawned. In all of them lies the fascination and possibilities of the unknown.

* * * * *

Where Girls are Wanted. The case for emigration is generally given, as it touches domestic servants, skilled mechanics, and those admirable persons who are wanted everywhere. But the everyday, middle-class girl, who has a good education, a comfortable but not too wealthy home, and a brother or a

husband, meditating a flight to new lands, is left in doubt as to whether in those lands she will be a help or a hindrance. All she knows is that she is not needed here. Now we have a very definite assurance that, as far as the great North-West of Canada is concerned, girls of this type are likely to be of great use to their men folk. Miss Flora Shaw, who is a Colonial specialist, has just come back from that wild new land where she has penetrated even to Klondyke. Her testimony, which has been confirmed by Canadian papers, is that girls as well as young men are wanted in those broad new lands. The fact is indeed indisputable that women can, if they will, take a very important part in the movement to the outposts of civilisation, for which, hitherto, men have been chiefly responsible. And on the Canadian prairie the young wife who accompanies the settler, or the average well-bred English girl who is tempted by Miss Shaw's counsel to accompany her brother, will find some at least of the conditions much in her favour. She will live among people of her own blood, and amid moral surroundings identical with those in which she has been trained. She will have no need to part from the fundamental conceptions of English life.

Moreover, the value of her presence and help and sympathy to her comrade can hardly be over-estimated. On this view of the matter Miss Shaw does not lay a whit too much emphasis. We should hear little of the failure of 'younger sons' on the prairie if from the first the farm had been a 'homestead' in the true sense of the word, and the severe strain of solitary existence—*minus* all the comforts and associations of home in the Old Country—had thus been warded off. But on the other hand, in the case of the girl or woman, as in that of her brother or husband, certain elementary qualifications are absolutely essential to success. Courage, thrift, industry, self-reliance, and adaptability to the ways of the country—without these things neither the richness of the soil, nor the healthiness of the climate, nor any of the other advantages of the country, will make the homestead what it should and might be.

* * * * *

What unexpected persons help to make history!
Jane Cakebread and English laws. Jane Cakebread is dead, and is notorious for the fact that she had been convicted of drunkenness something like three hundred times, and for the free and easy, and often humorous, way in which she treated the magistrates

who had to deal with her. But it is an open secret that it was her case and the talk it created which was the origin of the Habitual Drunkards Act, which comes into force with 1899. By this Act any one convicted of drunkenness three times in one year will be sent to a house of detention for inebriates for a period of three years. In these they will be medically treated for drunkenness as for a disease. And if at the end of three years they are not cured they probably never will be. Although, while our streets are packed with temptations as they are now, it will be a hard struggle doubtless when the patient emerges, still it will be a great point to at least have the habitual drunkards away from their homes for that length of time. It will give the homes a holiday. And there are hundreds and hundreds of women and men too—I say it literally and seriously—who are curses to the homes they live in, whose ten days' conviction is a glad relief, absolutely futile though it has proved to be as a deterrent. But drunkenness, Acts or no Acts, still remains one of our most terrible insolvable British problems. And the more one knows of the character and personal surroundings of some of the most notorious of drunkards, the more curious does the problem become. They are not vicious or altogether bad; they are often very generous and lovable, some of them very interesting, a few are geniuses. Yet their own lives are spoiled, and they contrive to spoil any number of other lives by this fatal weakness. Take the woman in point. Mr. Holmes, the Police Court Missionary, who tried so hard to save this poor soul from herself, says of her: 'She was a strange, odd creature, with a wonderful flow of language, sometimes witty and pungent, sometimes inconsequent drivel. The strangest thing about it was that she had no real craving for drink. A half-pint of four ale was quite enough to knock her off her balance. She was never "drunk and incapable," only disorderly. Another remarkable trait in her character was her personal cleanliness. Jane used under all circumstances to wash herself and clean her teeth every day—brickdust would do if no other dentifrice was available. When in that long hard winter a few years ago the frost lasted seven or eight weeks, she slept out of doors the whole time, and used to go down to the Lea and break the ice to wash herself. She had many delusions, the chief being that she was really enormously wealthy, and belonged to an aristocratic family. Of course she was really

insane, though it is a great pity there is at present no halfway house for week-brained creatures like her, who are not sane enough to have their liberty, but are too sane to be classed with maniacs.' But think of the large proportion of man- and womankind who ought to be in such a house. Why not devote a whole county—say Yorkshire—to that purpose?

* * * * *

Suicide and other Things. It appears from recent discoveries that burglars, mad dogs, suicides, and murderers have their in-season and out-of-season months. December is the chief in-season month for burglars. November is also a time when they may safely be reckoned on. Certainly it would take a very safe and large haul to tempt me out into a November or December fog a-burgling. But then perhaps burglars have not the same constitutional objection to fogs as I have; indeed it is said that they choose the foggy night with malice aforethought, because the police also share my aversion to fog in the throat and stay in the snuggest corner in their beat to meditate. But it is very odd to learn that if you want to commit suicide it is only proper to do it in June or July. Those are the fashionable months, though why they should be is one of those things nobody can understand, the actors in the tragedy probably least of all, poor things. If there is any time when life occurs more beautiful than another it is in the glory of June sunshine. And poverty surely presses more lightly when warmth and cheer can be had for the seeking. Yet statistics, which of course cannot lie, demonstrate that these are the months when the largest proportion of suicides take place. Does any one know the explanation?

Broadly speaking, you may expect to be burgled in December, to be murdered in June, and to commit suicide in July. Over the remainder of the months you may spread being bitten by mad dogs, run over by a scorching cyclist, wrecked in a train, and blown up in a gas explosion. Life is really becoming very exciting.

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' competitions, see p. 120.)

FIRST SHELF.

1899.

The last year of the Nineteenth Century ! The 'nineteenth century,' of which so many things have been said and written, and which people have hardly ceased to hold responsible for new thoughts and new ways. Well, if it has remained young and vigorous and inventive through all its hundred years, it surely speaks well for the new times that are coming.

THE MONTHLY PACKET has lived through very nearly half of our old century. It was new, in those new times of 1851, when the Great Exhibition was the sensation of the moment, and was really the beginning of a great deal that has come after. It spoke with the new voice of deepened religious life, it taught truths and inculcated a tone of thought which many of us have grown up to think so much a matter of course that it seems trite to dwell on it. There are, of course, no new truths, but there are new applications of old ones, new hearts to learn them, and we trust a new receptiveness to some aspects of truth, for which fifty years ago the time was not yet come. May the old PACKET, so long as it can carry its cargo, have the best new things of the nineties as well as it had the best new things of the fifties in its freight. And for each one of us, surely it is especially a time to gather up the fragments, to set our lives in order, and start again, on longer or shorter voyages as time will show. For we all sail under sealed orders.

CHELSEA CHINA'S CONFESSIONS.

Chelsea China, who is nothing if not practical, has been turning out her drawers, and finds a long list of sins of omission, which she will proceed to confess. First of all, a kind contributor lent her a copy of 'Tales from Blackwood,' containing Mrs. Oliphant's 'Secret Chamber.' There is no name on the book, and she has forgotten the address. Will the kind friend forgive her and supply it? Next, there are, she knows too well, mislaid contributions, omitted names and unanswered letters, piled up in the secret archives of her conscience—answers which have lost their queries, and queries which have never got an answer. And there are *Charitable Appeals* which have appealed in vain. There is the Diocese of New Westminster, which has sent its pretty quarterly paper with an account of its very good works—and we can do no more than say that the Rev. J. G. Mercier, Kemerton, Tewkesbury, will welcome any interest that may be taken in it. There is the Home of the Good Shepherd, East Moor, West Cross R.S.O., Glamorganshire, wants money to keep on its

good work as a Church Refuge. A charming 'Manual of Housewifery,' by Helena Head (Lee and Nightingale, North John Street, Liverpool, rs.), ought to have been recommended to all 'domesticated' people. And Miss Edna Lyall called our attention to *some* good work, and we cannot remember what it was! A long list of omissions truly! Many subjects started by correspondents have dropped, but this is not only Chelsea China's fault.

PROGRAMME FOR THE NEW YEAR.

Now, having confessed her own sins, Chelsea China feels free to point out other people's. Why have some of the Search Answerers a constitutional incapacity for sending their answers *direct* to Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon? Why does people's eyesight fail them when they come to our last page, which contains so much needful information? And then, as the General Post Office is not under the control of Madame Blavatsky, or any other occult personage, letters posted in the country on the 25th of the month do not reach the office on that day, but on the day after.

The Search Questions will continue as usual, and so will the Variety Subjects. We think that for the Prose Composition, which always seems popular, we will take six historical characters, and Chelsea China will do her best to select unhackneyed ones. *Bog Oak* will endeavour to make her missionary demands a little shorter and easier, in the hope of extending her borders, and Chelsea China offers one new departure.

'Nature Notes' are familiar to many High School students, and we propose to have something of the kind in the China Cupboard. Chelsea China asks each month for any natural fact *personally observed*. It need not be unusual, but it must be accurate, and have a date and a locality. The first celandine would be worth noticing, or the last swallow. Chelsea China cannot undertake to give marks or class lists or to conduct a regular competition, at first, but she will acknowledge the papers in the China Cupboard, and print the most interesting facts, and perhaps later on a more definite plan may be adopted. Some recognition at the end of six months will be given to the most successful observer of nature.

A REQUEST.

Chelsea China is requested by the Editor of *Friendly Leaves* to say that very short papers, in prose or verse, from China Cupboard contributors, if on suitable and interesting topics, would be welcomed and considered if sent in to the Editor, G. F. S., Central Office, 39, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.

VARIETY SUBJECT FOR NOVEMBER.

Thoughts suggested by the colour Blue.

The thoughts of youth, as the poet says, 'are long, long thoughts'; but Chelsea China was hardly prepared for the amount of reflections suggested by the colour Blue. She gave the subject as a *pis-aller*, and it has proved unexpectedly attractive. Very pretty thoughts have come to our various contributors, and the subject is suggestive, for they have not exhausted it. The occult and mystical meaning of various colours, found, we believe, in cabalistic writing, and lending themselves to ideas akin to those of Swedenborg and other visionaries, lead one into fascinating paths of research, and there are even those who think that colours have force as well as significance, and produce the very qualities ascribed to them. But

this notion renders the choice of wallpapers and carpets altogether too serious a matter for ordinary humanity.

Nora seems to have got hold of an interesting idea in binding her thoughts of blue together as the colour of the unattainable, and it may be further said that blue in nature is often an *impression* rather than a fact. Individual wild hyacinths are hardly blue; absolutely blue feathers form a small portion of the flashing colour of a blue-tit, and so in other cases. The blue of mist and vapour, which gives the sense of concealment, may be partly responsible for the infernal associations of blue, to say nothing of the blue flames of sulphur. It is also associated with cold, and so with the negative of life—with death. *Skena Vaw* says that indigo dyers were supposed to have low spirits, but this can hardly account for 'the blues' and other kindred expressions. *Winifred Spurling* gives good instances, and makes out a better case than *Nora* for blue flowers. *Proserphina* sends a beautiful paper, but there is more contrast in *Holly Leaf's* personal associations. We give these three, but *Scotland Yard's* little poem. *E. V. B., Fa-ik*, and many other very good papers have reached us.

THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE COLOUR BLUE.

'Blue are the hills that are far from us,' says the wistful Gaelic proverb, and I think that the idea of distance—unattainable distance—is the one primarily suggested by the colour blue.

It is not merely that there is the 'blue distance' of a spring or autumn day, a state of the atmosphere in which ordinary commonplace hills and lines of copse and hedgerow take—if they be only far enough away—strange tints of cobalt in sunshine, indigo in storm.

Nature seems to intend that blues should be seen from a distance. The innumerable 'green things of the earth' we may touch and handle if we will. The earth upon which we tread is ruddy or brown. Even the white fleecy cloudlets of a sunny day, or the black cloud-squadrons which the storm-wind drives across the firmament, are comparatively near us, but how infinitely far off seems the endless blue ether which we call the sky!

The sea, too, is only blue when viewed from a distance. When we are actually upon water its blueness vanishes, and it becomes either a clear, pellucid green, or a sullen opaque grey, according to circumstances.

* * * * *

Again, Nature is chary of using blue in her flower effects. With the exception of the wild hyacinth, which certainly does sometimes appear 'the heavens upbreking through the earth,' there is not one blue flower which forms a distinct feature in the landscape, nothing to compare with the gold of a gorse-covered common or the rose-purple of a stretch of heather.

There is the crane's-bill and the bluebell, better known to the Southron as the harebell, and the turquoise forget-me-not; but these are almost all, and these, and such as these, are but lovely details in *Flora's* pageant.

The spring glories of what country folk call 'the blossom,' meaning thereby the bloom of apple and cherry, damson and pear collectively, the pale yellow of the wild mustard, and the deeper gold of the buttercup, the pink evanescent loveliness of the wild rose, and the snow of the hawthorn; it is with these that Nature produces her big effects. There is very little blue apparently in the colour-box from which she takes her flower tints.

* * * * *

'Les yeux bleus
Vout aux cieux.'

runs the French saying.

Personally, I think that there are very few eyes which can, strictly speaking, be called blue ; most of those which are so described being rather of the hue the destination of which is '*Paradis*.' The 'violet' eyes, so common in fiction, are extremely rare in real life, and fortunately perhaps, since they would be quite out of keeping with anything less than golden hair and a rose-leaf complexion.

But why is it that sailors so often have blue eyes, or what pass for such ? Is it that their eyes imperceptibly assimilate themselves to the colour of the distant waves upon which they are so constantly fixed ? Or is it rather that the blue-eyed Saxon races take most kindly to the sea ? Certainly, the typical bronzed and fair-bearded sailor has blue eyes, be the reason what it may.

The eyes of animals are rarely blue (if we except the curiously opaque, China-blue of young kittens)—another instance of Nature's chariness in using the colour.

She occasionally introduces it into plumage, so that we have the sapphire sheen of the kingfisher's neck and the peacock's breast ; but on the whole it is seldom seen in the garb of bird or beast.

Only in heraldry occur 'blue dragons,' and kindred monsters ; only in the Noah's Ark or the sign of the village ale-house need we fear to encounter a purple monkey or a blue cow.

* * * * *

Which brings me back to my claim that blue is the colour of the unattainable.

'Celestial rosy red,' we have it on Milton's authority, is 'love's proper hue.' Green has long been regarded as the colour of Hope and Spring. White belongs to innocence, and black to grief. Blue I hold to be expressive of that longing which may be either bliss or pain, or both.—
NORA.

It is a colour so suggestive of romance, mystery, and delight, and yet so connected with lovely images and visions wearing its garb, that it is difficult to disentangle the thoughts from the recollections of concrete things that have clothed themselves in its various shades, and perhaps it is only by comparison of the many things blue that have raised certain feelings in us, that we can define its constant impression.

1. Blue of the sky, that intense, impenetrable noon-tide blueness that makes the heavens seem quite near to us ; the dark, still, solemn shade of starlight nights, or one streak of its vivid colour breaking through masses of dark, billowy cloud, and bringing relief into our gloomiest thoughts.

2. Blue of air and distance, of hills that seem the faint boundary of a fairer, more ideal world ; of the haze on the nearer mountain slopes, the mist of vale or plain, seen at its deepest and loveliest through the framing boughs of trees.

3. Blue of the sea, as it deepens towards the white crests of waves, round the eddying currents on its glossy surface, or lightens round purple streaks of seaweed and grey cat's-paws of wind.

4. Startling, penetrating, blueness of dear eyes, speaking courage, humour or innocence, out of the brown of sunburnt, or the pure white of delicate faces.

5. Blue of flowers ; the clear, opaque brightness of forget-me-nots and nemophila, the dark, deep softness of gentians and salvias ; the shimmering haze of bluebells, 'the heavens breaking through the earth.' Their appearance in a world of greenness, against the brown of earth, by their red or white, or golden compatriots, gives us a thrill, almost a shock of surprised delight—so much less a natural and expected evolution of colour do they always seem.

6. Then the blue in pictures, that lovely ariel shade in Turner's skies and distances, the colour of the robe in Murillo's 'Enthronement,' as the Virgin floats above the crescent moon; but no, after all, pictures, robes, fabrics only introduce us to the thoughts other minds have suggested to us through the medium of blue, and that would make the subject all too wide for its China shelf. Instead, let us generalise.

Every example has one common effect, for blue, wherever we have met it, has given wonder and surprise. Delight, happiness, contentment, have come with the surprise, but it has affected us first by its unexpectedness, by its contrast to the other shades and tints of the world surrounding us. Something far removed from the greens and browns and greys of sober, everyday life, it has power by its purity and distinctness to lift us out of dulness and gloom and the commonplace by its message of far-away things; of romance, of mystery, of imagination, and, above all, of hope. It is indeed a thought, a word, a colour, to

'Break the mesh
Of Fancy's silken leash.'

and transport her to her happiest, most ethereal realms.—PROSERPHINA.

The blue room, with its carpet, curtains, wallpaper, jugs and basins—all bearing in different shades the stamp of the sacred colour they are dedicated to.

Now my thoughts travel back to the dear old black and blue school-room tablecloth; made black by the spluttering of many ink blots and the wiping of many inky steel pens.

Seated round the schoolroom table were three little girls in blue—navy serge in winter, pale blue cotton in summer. I was practically brought up and nurtured in blue, yet with all my early training I confess with shame it failed to turn me out a blue-stockings.

Oh! those dreary hours of four-finger exercises on the schoolroom piano before breakfast: how cold and dark those winter mornings used to be, how blue and pinched I used to look! I am only judging from the appearance of my scraggy little paws; I couldn't see my face, as our schoolroom didn't boast of a looking-glass, but if my little pug-nose was the same colour as my hands, I must indeed have been a study for any artist in request of a half-starved crossing-sweeper or London flower-girl. Talking of noses, did you ever see anybody with a blue nose? Our dancing-master had one; he said it was from the effects of a chilblain, which used to visit him every winter. Our old nurse used to shake her head mysteriously, and say, 'Fine she knew what was the cause of yon chilblain.' We wondered what she meant, but she never would say.

Well, fortunately for us, winter didn't last for ever, and summer came at last, and with it two months at the seaside. How we used to slave away, making bathing gowns for our forty-eight little china dolls! Every conceivable bit of blue stuff was seized from the rag-bag or nursery cupboard. We had an idea that red was rather a vulgar colour; it had associations with a certain soap-boiler's family who had a house next door to us at St. Andrews; they all bathed in red cotton, from the mamma down to the parlourmaid, so we firmly vowed that our belongings should remain blue for ever.

Blue, blue, glorious blue, nature indeed would be poor without thee. And what about our army and navy, our police force, our post and railway officials, our charity school-girls and our laundries! Life is fleeting fast; I am steadily growing into an old woman, but I still cling closely to my favourite colour. I love to gaze upon its tints and hues, whether it be in the depths of the vast expanse of ocean, or high overhead on a bright

frosty day, or by the waterside where the simple little forget-me-not holds up its diminutive hand, or in the precincts of Winchester, Harrow, Eton, Oxford or Cambridge.

Our ancestors showed their wisdom in choosing this warm colour to paint their nude frames with.

Our nationality fiercely and bravely defends 'the true blue' with their last breath. As our Union Jack marches boldly forward into battle, think for one moment of the thousands of brave fellows who have gladly lain down their lives for its cause. While we maintain our British army and navy, no one shall dare to tamper with our colours. Blue is the virgin colour, and therefore an emblem of purity; but it also soars above all other colours as an emblem of unity and strength.—HOLLY LEAF.

PRIZE WINNER FOR NOVEMBER.

Miss A. C. Shipton, Grove Rectory, Retford.

SUBJECT FOR JANUARY.

Antiquities and traditions of interest connected with any one parish personally known to you.

SECOND SHELF.

PROSE COMPETITION.

SUBJECT FOR NOVEMBER.

A Pet.

Pets! Many and various, and mostly making up for moral depravity by personal charm. How is it possible to choose between them? It is hard to give up "That Animal," *Thames Valley's* opossum—though Chelsea China thinks he might have been better left up a gum-tree, *Ruby's* sea-gull, *E. V. B.'s* puppy, Ben Scrap, *Gray Squirrel's* dormouse, and many another claim attention. Chelsea China wishes she had known in earlier life that the death of caged dormice was caused by their molar teeth growing too long and pressing into their poor little brains, and that it is possible to file them. Alcibiades and Agamemnon, and several other lost darlings might have had a longer career if she had had that knowledge in her youthful days. But on the whole 'Lambie' appeals the most to her sympathies. It is certainly a mistake to enter into ideal relations with little straggling black-faced lambs. It is also wise to resist the fascinations of black baby pigs. Pigs, it is said, have fine undeveloped characters, but in this imperfect world a pet pig does lead to complications! Little wolves are also very unpopular in a suburban neighbourhood. They howl at the moon, and occasionally escape—and altogether their characters are wanting in repose. A good deal of affection is sometimes wasted on irresponsible cats, though there *are* cats with many interesting qualities. The only difficulty with a dog is that he *can't* be a mere pet. One is responsible for his moral being.

A PET.

Which shall it be? That is the question. Not you, my Pixie Prince, dearest of cats, nor you, little dog of the wistful brown eyes; 'pet' is not the word to describe either of you; when 'a friend' is the character study, then I will draw your portraits with what skill I can.

But there is still much room for choice left : pets of the present—cats, dogs, and birds—and pets of the past, sad memories as well as happy ones, for he who increaseth pets increaseth sorrow as well as joy.

At last my decision is made, and from my pets of the present I select 'Lambie.' Poor Lambie! in all eyes but mine you have long outgrown your name as your attractions. It is as ridiculous to call a 'great rough sheep' a lamb, as it is to make a pet of him, 'they' say, and perhaps 'they' are right; but 'Lambie' you will always be, and very dear to me is my 'white pet,' as in the Highland tongue you are called. And you are fond of me—no one can deny your affection—as fond as in the days when your tottering little black legs carried you after me through the long, flower-starred grass. Those days do not seem so very long ago when you and Summer were young together, and the breeze wafted down fragrant petals, that were not whiter than the curly fleece they fell on, as you lay under the hawthorn-tree. Your voice is deeper, but not less plaintive, now than it was in those days when in piteous bleats you demanded your bottle. *Then* I used to carry you over the rough places, *now* my utmost strength can hardly move you an inch against your will. But to me you are the same Lambie still, though one by one your former friends have turned against you, and not without cause, for the tale of your misdeeds is a long and sad one. The very poise of your handsome head, with its aureole of wool and droll black face, speaks of mischief. And even when you are quietly and harmlessly employed, your greeny grey eyes, with their dark lashes, have a latent sparkle in them, telling, if the opportunity for iniquity arise, you will not fail to take advantage of it. I must sorrowfully allow that you plunder the barn for corn, and the storehouse for apples and turnips upon every possible occasion; that you nibble the shrubs and pull up flowers; that you waylay people and insist upon examining the contents of their baskets, and levy a heavy toll upon everything in the remotest degree eatable; that you sometimes butt people, and that you cut the most alarming and astonishing capers round those who are afraid of you; yes, I cannot but admit these and other charges against you, but for all that I maintain that you are most lovable. How can I be otherwise than faithful to you, when you have remained so constant to me, my Lambie? How can I altogether condemn your frequent raids into the house, and the subsequent marks of muddy cloven feet left on newly whitened floors, when I know that these excursions are made in search of me? You come to me for comfort in all your woes, just as you used to do when you counted your age by weeks, and I do my best for you in all your troubles, if I do shrink a little from close contact when you have just emerged from the 'dipping'-tub. You are my companion in woodland walks or seashore scrambles, as in the old days, but now instead of helping you over the rough places I hold to your fleece and you help me. You stand in front of me if danger seems to menace, instead of my sheltering you in my arms. You grieve the dogs by butting them when they try to fawn upon me, but it is only in an excess of zeal on my behalf. None of the animals can equal you in pretty coaxing ways, none are so ready for a game of romps, or are quicker to comprehend a word or action. Even those that dislike you wonder at your intelligence and ingenuity, though they are too often directed into evil channels. Of all my pets, Lambie, none has a warmer or more faithful heart than you, and none can be more fascinating, none can present such a picture of innocence as you can, or are so thoroughly versed in the ways of mischief! You are very dear when you are good—which is very seldom, unless you are ill—but you are dearer when you are naughty, and your little black legs carry you in paths they should not; when your quaint head (which looks so small set amidst the mass of wool round your neck) is carried at its most defiant angle, and your clear eyes give me a saucy look of entreaty to aid and abet you in your evil doing. Then you are irresistible, and I am more ready to uphold you as an engaging pet than

when you have abstained from mischief sufficiently for public opinion to pronounce you 'not quite so bad after all.'

Ah, Lambie! I wonder if the day will ever come when the spell will break and you will cease to care for me, and I will see you as the 'great, rough sheep' that others pronounce you? I could almost hope so, for otherwise the day when you can no longer be borne with, and sentence of banishment to some lone hill pasture is pronounced, will be for both of us a sad one indeed.—FA-1K.

Once as I was kneeling with bent head engaged in weeding the south border, an avalanche of snails descended upon me. Rising and looking over the wall to rebuke this unneighbourly action, I found him in the person of Archibald, the small freckled boy who lived next door. He expressed his sorrow, saying artlessly that next time he wanted to get rid of snails he would throw them over into his other neighbour's garden.

After further conversation Archibald and I discovered that we had many ideas in common; we both disliked killing snails, and we liked to have our birds free and not confined to cages.

We were enumerating our various pets when Archibald exclaimed—

'Would you like to see Ianthe? she's my chiefest pet of all.'

I was curious to see Ianthe, so Archibald began hunting about the garden; he dived under a rubbish heap, poked about in the corners of a frame, and at last pounced upon something hiding amongst a pile of wood.

Ianthe proved to be a beautiful violet beetle, known to collectors as *Carabus violaceus*.

I said I had read that insects could not be made into pets because they neither understood nor were understood by man.

Archibald did not agree with this statement. 'Ianthe and I understand one another perfectly,' he affirmed.

The beetle certainly seemed to know Archibald, it remained passive in his open hand, its wings glinting copper and violet in the sunshine; but when he put it on the gardening glove covering my right hand, it made haste to hide itself between the gauntlet and my bare wrist. I caught hold of it and put it upon the trunk of a tree, when it tucked up its six legs and fell to the ground. Archibald looked reproachfully at me.

'She is a ground beetle,' he said, 'and does not care to climb, neither does she care for strangers, but she is awfully fond of me—I take her to school with me sometimes,' he added.

I wondered it did not get lost, so he showed me how he kept it by him during school-hours.

He put a small india-rubber ring round its body, then drew some strands of silk through the ring, knotting the ends round one of his waistcoat buttons.

Ianthe clung to the inside of his coat, and Archibald declared that she liked the darkness and cosiness of it, and was proud of wearing an elastic band.

According to Archibald the beetle did many wonderful things, but he had to confess that it would not come to him when he called.

'She hides for fun, to make me look for her,' he said. 'I have had her ever since I was a kid, and once I could not find her for nearly a year, then she popped out in front of me from the potting-shed.'

'Perhaps it was a different beetle,' I suggested. 'How did you know it was Ianthe?'

Archibald did not deign to answer this question, but the same expression flitted across his face that I have seen in the eyes of mothers when they hear a man declare that all babies are exactly alike.

Soon after this conversation my neighbours left the place.

To the last moment poor Archibald was hunting frantically for his coy Ianthe to take her with him ; it could truly be said that he left no stone unturned to find her, but with no result, except his getting extremely dirty and trying the tempers of the people waiting for him.

All this happened long ago, but to-day as I was digging I disturbed a beautiful violet beetle. I took it up on my finger, it tucked up its legs and fell to the ground, quickly hiding behind some planks of wood.

I moved the planks, softly calling ' Ianthe.' It may have been a gleam of memory that made it remain momentarily still ; then it scuttled off to another hiding-place, making clear that if it were Archibald's pet it had no wish to be mine.—WINIFRED SPURLING.

PRIZE WINNER FOR NOVEMBER.

Miss W. Macdougall, Dunollie, Oban.

CLASS LIST FOR NOVEMBER.

DISTINCTION.

Winifrid Spurling, Gray Squirrel, Thomas Valley.

CLASS I.

Ruby, Tartar, E. V. B., Snowy Mespilis, Sea Maiden, Dinah Doe, Bildad, Tomtit, Nora, Bee.

CLASS II.

Miranda, Linden, Lag Last, Holy Leaf.

SUBJECT FOR JANUARY.

Sir Walter Raleigh.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR NOVEMBER.

(*Metaphors.*)

1. 'Sun-girt city ! Thou hast been
Ocean's child and then his queen.'
2. 'The gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve.'
3. 'Look if a beggar in fixed middle-life
Should find a treasure—can he use the same
With straitened habits and with tastes starved small ?'
4. 'The very source and fount of Day,
Is dash'd with wandering isles of night.'
5. 'A little Cyclops with one eye
Staring to threaten or defy.'

Explain shortly the above metaphors, and give their author and source.

6. Give another metaphor from a well-known poet, explaining its meaning.

(Marks for the above will be affected by merit in the explanations.)

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS.

'A Metaphor is a transference of the relation between one set of objects to another, for the purpose of brief explanation.'—ABBOTT'S 'Grammar of Shakspeare.'

1. SHELLEY. 'Lines written among the Euganean Hills! (Venice is a child of ocean, as she gradually grew up on a cluster of islets in the Adriatic, and she became 'his queen' on account of her great maritime power, symbolised by the yearly ceremony in which her Doge 'wedded the Adriatic.')

2. COLERIDGE. 'Youth and Age.' (As in the morning sunshine the dew-drop sparkles and reflects colour—like a diamond—so to the eye of youth life is bright and attractive, while to old age it appears dull and wearisome, even as the evening dewdrop is cold and colourless—like a tear.)

3. BROWNING. 'An Epistle of Kharshish, the Arab Physician.' (Lazarus, with the knowledge of God and heaven gained during his four days' sojourn in the other world, is compared to a beggar who, in middle life, suddenly finds a treasure. As his low habits and tastes prevent him from making a good use of it, so Lazarus could not use his knowledge of heaven because he was only possessed of earthly capabilities.)

4. TENNYSON. 'In Memoriam,' xxiv. (The poet, looking back on his intercourse with Arthur Hallam, doubts if it can have been as happy as it seems in his recollection, since the very sun itself is partly obscured by spots, which seem to move about on its surface.)

5. WORDSWORTH.—'To the Daisy.' (A fanciful resemblance traced by the poet in the yellow centre of the bold little flower to the single eye in the centre of the forehead of this fabled monster.)

6. (a) 'Footprints on the sands of Time' (LONGFELLOW, 'The Psalm of Life'). (As footprints mark a stretch of sand, so a life can leave its impress on the world.)

b. 'Come pensive nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure.'

(MILTON, 'Il Penseroso'). (The spirit of Melancholy, who loves a life of contemplation apart from the world.)

The above explanations are quoted from those competitors who seem to have answered best. The quotation from ABBOTT'S 'Grammar' may help to clear up some difficulties. Some of the answers do not distinguish a *simile* from a *metaphor*, while, although the lines given in 6 (b) form a *metaphor*, Milton further expands the idea in 'Il Penseroso' into an *allegory*. It is rather strange that many competitors have not realised the beautiful contrast in No. 2, and many speak of the 'wandering isles of night' in No. 4 as clouds, instead of sun-spots. Nos. 3 and 5 are well done generally, and the examples in No. 6 are well chosen in most instances.

MARKS FOR NOVEMBER.

60: Klee, Melton Mowbray, Nemo. 58: Irnham, Lenore, Thorshaven. 57: Athena, Cymraes, The Blue Cat. 55: Eleanor, Isabel. 54: Clio, Double-Dummy. 50: Syndicate. 49: Blue Wings. 48: E. M. Atkinson. 47: White Cat. 45: Trimmer. 44: Einsam. 43: R. V. H. 42: Honeylands. 36: W. Adey. 35: Malaprop. 30: All-Fours, Cavalier. 29: Scott. 17: M. R. A., Peter.

Fourteen Streams is credited with 60 marks for October.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR JANUARY.

1. *I am* said to be 'Our being's end and aim.'
 2. *I am* 'not a potato to be planted in a mould and tilled with manure.'
 - I am* 'a glory shining far down upon us from heaven.'
 3. *I* sometimes 'make the heart afraid.'
 4. *I am* a 'bitter thing to look into through another man's eyes.'
 5. *I was* 'born a twin.'
- (Author and source of each quotation to be given.)
6. If you have found out who *I am*, give a definition of me, original or quoted.

NOTICE.—Answers (to SEARCH QUESTIONS only) to be posted before the 25th of each month to *Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon*. 'Search Questions' to be written outside each envelope.

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

INDIA.

QUESTIONS FOR JANUARY.

1. Draw a sketch map of the province of India and Ceylon, adding an explanation of the positions of the several dioceses, in order of formation.
2. Write a Life of Henry Martyn.

Books recommended for the year's study:—*Classified Digest of S.P.G. Records*, 7s. 6d.; *Historical Sketches*: 'Delhi'; 'Chota Nagpur'; 'Tinnevely'; 'Cawnpore,' &c., 1d. each (S.P.G. Office, 14, Delahay Street, S.W.). *Under His Banner* (S.P.C.K. 5s.); *England's Mission to India*, by Bishop Barry, 3s. (S.P.C.K.); *Lives of Missionaries* (three series, 2s. each, S.P.C.K.—Martyn is in Series II.); *Life and Letters of Henry Martyn*, by Sargent, 2s. 6d. (Seeley & Co.).

Answers to be sent to Bog-oak Industrial School, Andover, by Feb. 1st., with any subscription (1s.) not already paid.

OCTOBER CLASS LIST.

CLASS I.

M.P., 39; Klondyke, 36; Ierne, 35; Veritas, 30.

CLASS II.

Honeysuckle, 29; Constans et Fidelis, 20.

REMARKS.

37. *Ierne*.—It is said that the greatest mental obstacle to the conversion of uncivilised races is not ignorance, but fear. The dread of malevolent powers, the darkness of a life peopled with horrible forms, leading to a belief in charms and sorcery, hinders conversion, which means braving these terrors. The antidote is (says Bishop Selwyn) to teach the Fatherhood of God and its proof, 'God so loved the world.' Some members do not suggest how the more practical difficulties are overcome.

38. Some include as part of Melanesia Fiji, Navigator, Friendly, Society Isles, also Pitcairn, New England, and New Ireland, most of which are Polynesian.

39. All should have given one principle of the mission—never to take work in any island occupied by other Christian missions.

40. The removal of the Melanesian College to Kohimarama in 1860, where they stayed till the removal to Norfolk Island in 1867, should have been in all the papers.

Bog-oak earnestly hopes the two-question plan will answer, and that nobody will feel over-worked.

'MONTHLY PACKET' NOTICES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The readers of the 'Monthly Packet' are invited to address **CHELSEA CHINA** on any subject the discussion of which occurs to them as likely to interest others, especially in connection with articles appearing in the Magazine.

CHINA CUPBOARD PRIZES—

Variety Specimens. Prize, monthly, 5s.

Search Questions (Who, When, and Where). Prize, for six months taken together, £1 1s.

Prose Competition. Monthly Prize, 5s., or 10s., according to merit.

RULES for the above—

(1) Papers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to **CHELSEA CHINA**, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co., Limited; they must NOT be addressed to 'the Editors.' (2) Each envelope must be marked *outside* with the subject to which it refers. Papers under separate competitions or discussions must be in separate envelopes. (3) The correspondent's name and address must be written on every paper: the use of a *nom de plume* for the lists is optional. (4) If competitors fail to comply with any rule, their papers will be disqualified. (5) The real name of the prize-winner is published in each case. (6) There are no entrance fees. (7) Prizes cannot be taken by the same person twice in a half-year.

[The Editors of the 'Monthly Packet' will feel obliged if All Contributors will write their names and addresses clearly on their MSS., and will enclose stamps for return. Unless these conditions are complied with, the Editors cannot undertake to preserve, return, or enter into correspondence about MSS. Much trouble is saved if accompanying letters are enclosed in the parcel instead of being sent separately.

The utmost care is taken in returning MSS., but the Editors can only hold themselves absolutely responsible for such as are sent to them at their own request.]

THE MONTHLY PACKET.

NEW SERIES.

FEBRUARY, 1899.

THE CONQUEST OF LONDON.

BY DOROTHEA GERARD (MADAME LONGARDE DE LONGGARDE),
AUTHOR OF 'A FORGOTTEN SIN,' 'A SPOTLESS REPUTATION,' 'LADY BABY,' ETC.

CHAPTER X.

THE PRODIGAL DAUGHTER.

IN her own, strictly individual way Ophelia too was enjoying her London season almost as well as her mistresses. Visitors having become too abundant to be wrestled with, she had taken the part of philosophically resigning herself to their presence ; one of the results of such philosophy, as well as of the good things a-going, being that the loose folds of yellow skin which in less prosperous days had added something leonine to her already slightly mixed appearance, had lately been steadily filling up, in a manner that made the necessity of a second Banting cure begin to appear on the horizon.

And yet Ophelia's sojourn in town was not to be entirely free of adventure.

One day early in July Lord Maurice Berners, entering the drawing-room in Arthur Street, stood still in dismay at only two paces from the threshold.

'Am I in the way?' he asked a little diffidently.

Cissy and Miss Amberley were alone in the room, the former staring in front of her with swollen red eyes, the latter snivelling a little suspiciously behind her stocking.

'No calamity, I hope?' asked Lord Maurice in a tone of

quick inquiry, very different from his habitual drawl, and looking round him as though in search of something.

'A great one,' was the answer, given in funereal tones, as Cissy melted into a fresh flood of tears.

'Please tell me quickly what is,' said Lord Maurice, coming up close to her, and actually laying his hand on her shoulder without knowing that he did it.

'Ophelia!' sobbed out Cissy, in choking syllables.

'Ophelia?' As Lord Maurice repeated the word, something like panic lit up the green eyes for a moment, making them look very different indeed from gooseberries. He never *could* remember to whom the name rightfully belonged, and it is probable that in his own mind he was accustomed to assign it to quite a different personage from the small yellow monster with whom he had grown familiar.

'Yes, since this morning—gone, utterly gone, and without her muzzle too! Probably she is killed by this time.'

'Muzzle?' said Lord Maurice in quite another tone. 'It's the dog that's lost,—is that it?'

'Yes, my own precious Ophelia; shall I ever see her again?'

'You shall see her again, I promise it you,' said the visitor, with unexpected fervour, and in the excess of the relief that had overcome him he took hold of Cissy's hand and pressed it so vigorously that she looked up surprised.

Ever since the beginning of the acquaintance Cissy and the 'Gooseberry' had been great chums—it was impossible that it should be otherwise with so many dogs, so many squirrels and monkeys to serve as links between them. But never until this moment had it occurred to her to think of him as anything but a delightful elder brother, also never had he pressed her hand with such fervour—indeed it was more a squeeze than a pressure—and the feeling of it sent a quite new sort of thrill through her childish meagre frame, troubling her in a new way which she did not in the least understand.

'You promise? You mean that you will get her back for me?'

'Yes, or perish in the attempt.'

'Oh, how good you are! Oh, how I thank you!' cried Cissy, raising her inflamed and excited eyes to his face. 'If only you bring her back you may count on my eternal gratitude,—I shall do everything you want,—I shall tell everybody you are the best person in the world.' And now it was she

was pressing his fingers between her own hot and unsteady ones. 'Aunt Susan, do you hear what he says? He is going to bring her back to us.'

'If he can find her in this Babylon,' said Miss Amberley despondently.

Incredible though it may seem, Miss Amberley had within the last months, and despite a deeply ingrained distrust of all quadrupeds, conceived something almost like affection for the animal whom she considered as a fellow-captive and a fellow-victim; and the thought of the hours henceforward to be spent alone, with no more queer, frog-like beast sleeping at her feet, filled her with unmistakable sadness. It seemed to her that she would miss even the sound of its stentorian breathing, grown more stentorian with advancing corpulence. It must be here remarked that since the Marchioness had taken up the girls, Miss Amberley enjoyed a considerable amount of exemption from social duties, and a peace so abundant that it went far towards reconciling her to a town residence.

'It will be dreadfully difficult,' said Cissy, relapsing into discouragement. 'She is certain to have been stolen. The first dog fancier who meets her would not be able to resist the temptation.'

Lord Maurice, being a bit of a dog fancier himself, and having his own opinion as to the possibility of resisting the temptation aforementioned, was discreetly silent.

'If she has not been taken up by a policeman, then she is probably at a dog-dealer's by this time. Couldn't one put an advertisement into the papers? If the man is honest he will bring her back of his own accord.'

'I rather fancy that if there *was* an honest dog-dealer in London he would have been put under a glass case long ago,' remarked Lord Maurice; 'but the advertisement certainly is the thing; and, in any case, please dry your eyes, Cissy; my honour is pledged to rescue Ophelia.'

In the midst of her trouble Cissy was aware of feeling another of those queer thrills of which the first dated from a few minutes back. He had called her Cissy; ought she not to be indignant? Probably she ought, since, thanks to her long frocks, she was a 'grown-up'; and grown-up young ladies cannot be called with impunity by their Christian names, but it is nevertheless true that what she did feel at present bore no

resemblance to indignation ; just as it also is true that during the days of suspense that now followed she thought a good deal not only about Ophelia, but also about the person who had promised to be her rescuer.

How Lord Maurice managed it was never precisely known ; whether it was the advertisement which had so miraculous an effect, or whether his intimacy with dog-dealers proved so efficacious, or whether it was money alone that did it—and no one thought of inquiring how much he had spent over it—but the fact remained that only two days after the tearful scene above recorded the green-eyed visitor re-entered the drawing-room in Arthur Street leading Ophelia in triumph, although slightly dilapidated-looking and minus several ounces of fat. Circumstances had favoured the recovery ; the dog-dealer in whose hands she had been found—as Lord Maurice subsequently confided to a friend—having yielded her up all the more readily because of not being quite convinced in his own mind of her actually being a dog.

‘Have I kept my word or not?’ asked Lord Maurice, turning to the assembled family, but looking for a smile of gratitude more especially on one pair of lips.

Cissy was on her knees already pressing the bullet-like head of her pet to her stormily beating heart. Now she looked up into the rescuer’s face as devoutly as though he had been a winged good angel.

‘You have kept it gloriously,’ she said in a voice that jerked with ill-suppressed excitement. ‘I shall never forget it. Oh, how I thank you—how I thank you!’

‘And what have I deserved?’ asked Lord Maurice, but Cissy saw at once that he was not speaking to her. Following his gaze, she could see that it was on Adela that his eyes rested, and for some reason or other she felt provoked that it should be so.

‘What have I deserved? A very big reward, surely?’

‘The biggest we can give you,’ said Philippa warmly. ‘Choose it for yourself.’

‘I daren’t do that,’ he answered, growing unexpectedly grave. ‘It might turn out too big, after all.’

‘Nothing could be too big,’ Cissy was beginning hotly, when Evelyn, being the practical one of the family, changed the subject by remarking that the happy event ought surely to be celebrated in some especial manner.

'By an illumination?' suggested Philippa, always ready for new ideas; 'or by decorating the house with garlands of—what would be the most appropriate? Sausages, I suppose.'

'Why not give a dance?' said Lord Maurice, 'and call it "The Ball of the Prodigal Daughter"?'

'A dance!'

The suggestion was so bold that a moment of silence followed.

'It seems to me the most appropriate version of the fatted calf; and Ophelia would naturally have to get a new bow for the occasion, and be the heroine of the evening.'

'Oh, that is splendid—let it be a dance!' cried Cissy springing to her feet. 'Yes, I want it to be a dance!'

'We must think over it,' said Philippa, merely from force of habit, and not because she was not already won to the idea; which, indeed, was not quite a new one. Even before this the delightful possibility had more than once traversed their minds;—to give a ball and then die had appeared to be all that one could wish for, but until now they had still hesitated on the brink of what necessarily appeared a vast undertaking. It had required some outward cause to give to their resolution the necessary push, and that push had been given to-day. The circumstance of Philippa having already reluctantly come to the conclusion that Uncle Lugdale's money would hardly last out more than two seasons, rather favoured the new suggestion than otherwise. If there really were only to be two seasons, let them at least be brilliant. And so before Lord Maurice had taken his leave that afternoon, the idea he had vaguely thrown out was no longer an idea but a hard and fast project.

Henceforward for many days the 'Ball of the Prodigal Daughter' was the object towards which all, or very nearly all thoughts and desires of Arthur Street converged. True, the estimates sent in by the tradesmen consulted were a little staggering; but by the time they came in most of the invitations had already gone out; it was impossible to recall them, and equally impossible not to do the thing in the way that was evidently expected of them. At this juncture it was that the mental intoxication from which they had been suffering ever since their feet had touched London pavement reached its height; what wonder, therefore, if the threatening bills were, according to the family method, 'Left to fate,' together with all thoughts of the morrow?

Face to face with such an opportunity for artistic display, Evelyn's interest in balls, which lately had seemed to be languishing, woke up abruptly. Soon she was almost feverishly busy with plans of decoration which were to show the world how little it really understood of those things.

'I want it to be perfect,' she said on one occasion; 'it's the last ball I shall go to for some time, and therefore it's just to be stunning.'

'The last? How's that?' asked some one. 'The season is not over yet.'

'Oh, yes, for you, but I am getting too busy to dance,' said Evelyn, smiling a little mysteriously. 'But I *do* mean to dance this time, and with a vengeance too!'

The day on which the big drawing-room in Arthur Street found itself metamorphosed into a dancing-room, and all but the most indispensable bedrooms converted into delightfully elegant retreats for the non-dancers,—on which the lobby bloomed with red roses and the staircase with white, and supper at fifteen shillings a head—without the champagne—was spread in the dining-room, was a greater day even than the one of Mrs. Thursby's first dance, and found every one in a state of excitement so highly strung that equanimity itself seemed to be in danger. It was on Cissy, more especially, that the strain of events seemed to have told most severely, sharpening her naturally quick temper into something that almost resembled querulousness. Something had changed Cissy lately, though her sisters, busy with their own concerns, only took note of it in a vague and far-off manner. It was not until the moment of actually dressing for the dance that Philippa felt her attention momentarily aroused by her sister's manner. Never before had she seen Cissy so particular, not to say cranky, about the details of her dress, a thing which until now she had regarded somewhat as a necessary evil, a mere accessory to other pleasures. To-day her fastidiousness drew remarks even from the French abigail.

'Mademoiselle is very hard to please this evening,' remarked this official after having twice altered the outline of Cissy's coiffure. 'And yet I have done her hair just as usual.'

'But I don't want it to be as usual,' said Cissy impatiently. 'I want it to be better done to-day. I don't see why my hair should be paid less attention to just because I am the youngest. Why can't I have it done like Adela's?'

'Because you aren't Adela,' said Philippa laughing; 'and no amount of hair-dressing will make you into her.'

'You don't count on making any especial impression to-night, do you?' asked Evelyn, eyeing her younger sister curiously. 'Because if you do, you're in a wrong boat. I told you that shade of pink would make you look like a meal-sack, and that's just what it's doing.'

'No, no, Evelyn,' said the good-natured Adela, 'only a little pale, but dancing will give her a colour; and never mind your hair, Cissy, I like it better than mine, if you want my private opinion.'

'Oh, you!' cried Cissy, turning quickly towards her sister and almost glaring at her with angry, inimical eyes; 'it is easy for you to talk, you've got no need to bother about your appearance—and because you know you're all right you find it amusing to laugh at me; you're all laughing at me, and I won't have it!'

'Cissy!' said Philippa in a tone which Cissy had not heard since Gilham. 'What *can* be the matter with you to-day?'

But Cissy, suddenly aware of the astonishment she was creating, had already come to her senses, and with a shrill, if somewhat awkward laugh, had sat down again before the glass, abandoning herself once more to Mademoiselle Ernestine's ministrations.

'Oh, I'm excited, that's all; and we're all excited. I suppose that's why we're so apt to quarrel.'

Under the pressure of the moment the explanation was accepted as sufficient, and very soon the approaching delights of the evening had blotted out even the memory of Cissy's queer mood.

And what with the undeniable triumph of Evelyn's contrivances, the perfectly distributed lights and flowers, the first-class music, the tepid July air coming in by the open windows, it was a wonderful evening of its kind. Whether it was that the sisters Venning possessed the genius of hospitality, or whether they had only spent their money too freely to be badly served, certain it is that no hitch appeared anywhere. For long after the picture of this perfect evening stood in the sisters' memory as the high-tide mark of their London successes. Philippa in especial always looked back upon that July night as something quite by itself—the end of one phase in her life and the beginning of another. When she remarked

that Lord Maurice was more than usually busy with Adela, and in a way that was quite unmistakable—for to-night at last he had thrown off his mask of family friend—she felt pleased but did not guess at the importance which this observation would gain in her eyes on the morrow. Far more important at the moment appeared to her a private adventure of her own, of which the scene was the bath-room cunningly transformed into a fernery, and the time somewhere between three and four in the morning. How she came to be alone there with Mr. Hilbury, while a waltz was going on in the dancing-room, she was not sure—doubtless through some contrivance of her companion, who, having decided that the moment had come for putting his hopes to the test, had manœuvred for a *tête-à-tête*—an accomplishment in which, for the matter of that, he was well versed.

Never before, however, had this well-known heiress-hunter—the marrying man who was always marrying and had never got married yet—felt so nervous as he did on this occasion. It was first of all because of the money which he believed her to possess that he wanted to marry Philippa, but it was also because of her so proud and clear grey eyes, her beautifully poised head, her upright and slender figure; and in the course of the past weeks and of much proximity in ball-rooms, the first-named motive had occasionally come in danger of being submerged by the second. For the smiling, eager-eyed man was quite as much of a Don Juan as an heiress-hunter, and this time had been hit rather harder than usual, which was the reason of his having left out of sight several rules of prudence, such as drawing in more precise information as to the legacy of which he had only gathered the most general idea. He was a fox of his kind, but a fox with a very inflammable fancy, and such foxes often run into traps which a mere chicken would have avoided.

At the time and place aforementioned, with the waltz music ringing out in the next room, Philippa and Mr. Hilbury stood opposite to each other in momentary silence. She had just received her first offer of marriage, and refused it, and was feeling a little flurried, although quite clear as to her own intentions. He, on the other hand, was attempting to steady himself under the blow of that No which had just been spoken very distinctly.

‘You cannot mean it in exactly that way, surely,’ he began

after that pause. 'You must have seen my devotion long ago, and you would never have allowed me to go so far if my sentiments had not awakened some return in you.'

'Your sentiments?' she said a little scornfully. 'If I had known you had any sentiments I would have stopped you long ago, of course. I thought you meant to be kind, nothing more; and most people are kind in London—at least, that is what we have found. I thought you were a friend—but not—not—'

'A lover? Oh, but Philippa, that is what I want to be!' and remembering that a little boldness often works wonders in such a crisis as this, Mr. Hilbury dexterously took possession of the hand which held the feather-trimmed wrap round the shoulders, for they were standing beside the wide-open window.

The wrench with which the fingers were released showed him that there are cases in which boldness is not in place.

'Don't call me Philippa!' she said, with eyes that had suddenly become dangerously bright. 'You are nothing to me but a friend, and you will not remain that for long either if you go on like this.'

'But in time,' pleaded Mr. Hilbury, a little cowed, 'may I not gain your love in time?'

'Never!' she said vehemently, as she moved a step nearer to the window. She was quite certain that, whoever her affections might belong to in time, it would certainly not be Mr. Hilbury.

But Mr. Hilbury's heart was beating too stormily at the sight of her beautifully flushed face to let him despair quite yet. Another effort must be made, and it should be a bold one.

'I know what puts you against me,' he remarked in a tone that was a wonderfully close imitation of injured innocence. 'My motives have been made suspicious to you. False friends have persuaded you that it is your fortune I seek rather than yourself. There always are false friends ready to do you these services.'

'I can't suspect you of that,' said Philippa more quietly. 'Indeed, your sentiments must be real, since I have no fortune to tempt you; it is simply that I don't return them.'

Through Mr. Hilbury's frame there passed something like an electric shock, which had the effect of instantaneously

sobering his excited senses ; but feeling himself under Philippa's eye he smiled a sickly smile. Had he heard aright ?

'You are too modest,' he managed to say a little uncertainly.

'About what ?'

'About your money,' he said, speaking with forced playfulness. 'Every one knows that you are great heiresses.'

'We, great heiresses ? Where on earth did you get hold of that fable ?'

'Where ? Why, everywhere ; all London is persuaded of it ; you are known to have four thousand a year each, or—do you mean to say that it is not *true* ?' he asked, his suave tone suddenly ringing with something that was very like insolence. 'Has it been a lie all along ?'

Philippa had retreated two further steps, and now stood close against the window, staring in complete bewilderment at the flushed and unquiet man, whose small eyes had just now a particularly ugly look in them.

'Of course it is a lie,' she said at last. 'But it is certainly not I who set it a-going. And people have been fools enough to believe it ? They actually think us rich ?'

'They have to, seeing the mode in which you live,' he answered almost roughly. The heiress-hunter had abruptly retaken the upper hand of the startled Don Juan. In such a test as this, this particular class of sentiment does not often stand proof.

'But this is dreadful !' cried Philippa in sudden excitement. 'We have been deceiving everybody all along without knowing it. But it shall not go on a day longer. I will tell everybody the truth, the exact truth, and you shall be the first person to know it. Listen, then : we *have* got four thousand pounds, but not each, and not a year ; four thousand is the sum which our uncle left us in the spring, and how much of it remains I don't exactly know, since we have been living on it ever since.'

'And that is all ?' asked Mr. Hilbury, his jaw very nearly dropping from sheer consternation.

'Absolutely all, except a hundred and twenty pounds a year and a cottage in the country, which belongs to us in common. When the four thousand pounds are exhausted we shall be as poor as church mice.'

'They must be pretty nearly exhausted already,' put in Mr. Hilbury, with a nasty laugh ; but Philippa paid no heed.

'You can tell everybody you like ; I don't want friendship under false pretences. If people have been kind to us only because they think us so rich, then I want no more of their kindness.' And drawing her white mantle around her, from which, like the stem of a flower issued her perfectly moulded neck, she looked at him with the icy glance of an offended queen.

In this moment Mr. Hilbury felt that it was criminal of Fate not to have added a fortune to such a neck and such eyes, a reflection which, however, did not keep him from presently making his way to the cloak-room.

'What a sell !' he muttered, as he groped for his overcoat, 'what a huge sell, and, by Jove, what an escape !'

And the marrying man went to bed once more without any immediate prospect of getting married.

CHAPTER XI.

A MANŒUVRE.

THE midday sunshine, streaming in through the open window of Philippa's room, fell to-day upon a very unusual object, one which had for months past never—or hardly ever—been illuminated by its rays, viz., an account book. Despite the fatigues of the past triumphant night the elder Miss Venning was up and dressed long before luncheon, while her sisters were still buried deep in their pillows. A certain new-born restlessness had driven her from her bed to her writing-table,—something that Mr. Hilbury had said last night on the back of the discovery which had so startled him, had served as a prick to her financial conscience. Was it indeed possible that she had miscalculated so hugely, and that the end of the four thousand pounds was so much nearer than she had supposed ? She must delay no longer in finding out ; and still, heavy-eyed with want of sleep, and with the evidences of last night's festivity still visible around her in the crushed ball-dress and faded bouquet that had been flung on to the sofa, she sat down to try and see daylight through the piles of bills, paid and unpaid, which

littered her table, and to wrestle with the estimates of how much would be likely to be over when these, and others which were probably still due, were cleared off. The mental numbness which for months past had been paralysing her calculating faculties had given way to a keen anxiety ; but, feverishly though she worked, the result was not very enlightening. Things had been left 'to fate' for so long that it was difficult to regain a proper hold over them. She was not even quite sure of the exact sum which Maggie Wheeler owed them, for it is almost needless to say that Mrs. Wheeler's operations had not stopped at that one dressmaker's bill. Cissy being so amiable it would have been a wicked waste of opportunity not to make further experiments, although for the sake of plausibility a certain variety had to be provided for. It could not always be a dressmaker ; once it was a diamond crescent which Maggie had borrowed surreptitiously from a friend, and had had the misfortune to lose, and which had to be replaced, also without her mother's knowledge, since it appeared that Mrs. Wheeler was particularly stern on the point of borrowing jewels ; and another time it was simply a bank-note which Aggie had lost through her own negligence. The loans had all been granted—not without a certain growing suspicion, but granted nevertheless—and through them Mrs. Wheeler was enabled to keep up her somewhat hand-to-mouth London existence for the rest of the season. And now Philippa began to wonder whether they would ever see that money again. As yet she had given but little thought to it, but it might yet turn out to be of importance ; for although she had not been able to make anything distinct of her calculations, she understood enough to make her seriously doubt of the possibility even of that second London season, on which until a few days ago she had still firmly counted.

'That would mean that this season is all we can positively build upon,' she mused, a little aghast. 'And it is terribly near its end. Of course we shall be able to stay on in London, but we shall have to retrench, that's clear ; and what will be the good of a second season if we cannot afford to keep up with people ? I do wonder where my head has been all along ? I suppose I always had a vague idea at the bottom of my mind that something would happen before the end of this season. Well, and something is going to happen, I am sure of that still. If Lord Maurice has not proposed last night—and I suppose

Adela would have told me if he had—then it is only because he hadn't the right opportunity ; and I don't believe he will come here again without proposing. Oh, I do wish I knew what Adela is going to say !'

With her aching head on her hand Philippa fell into a deep reflection. She felt very much afraid that Adela was going to say No ; in which case the chances for this season were pretty well closed. But was there any reason why she should not say Yes ? Although she objected to the colour of his eyes, it was certain that she liked Lord Maurice ; very likely she would get to love him in time ; indeed Adela was so young and so inexperienced that possibly she loved him already, without clearly realising it. A talk with her could do no harm, at any rate, and would help to bring light into the future ; for supposing—just supposing that Adela married Lord Maurice, then there could be no possible need of further bothering over these depressing account books. Lord Maurice would be welcome as a brother-in-law first of all because he was certain to be delightful in that quality, but also undoubtedly because with such a brother-in-law it was impossible ever to be quite destitute. How charming to have Adela safely settled, and to spend the greater part of the year with her in the delightful country place which was Lord Maurice's own, and where, of course, they would all feel as much at home as so many tame cats, and what a new and delightful experience to have a male protector who actually belonged to them and would henceforward fight their battles for them ! To the girl, who hitherto had fought not only her own battles but those of her sisters, this appeared the most enticing circumstance of all. As she warmed to the idea her spirits imperceptibly rose. She began to wonder if Adela was awake yet ; for with Philippa to form a resolution and to act upon it was generally an almost simultaneous process.

She was on the point of setting out on a voyage of discovery when Cissy came wandering in, in search of a hair-brush which in the yesterday's chaos had gone astray.

'Have you seen Adela yet ?' asked Philippa.

'No,' said Cissy shortly.

'Is she asleep still ?'

'I suppose so. She has got enough to dream about, at any rate.'

There was something like a sneer in the voice, and Philippa, looking up in surprise, was just in time to see a rather wicked little smile gliding over Cissy's colourless lips.

'It's a pity *you're* not asleep still,' she remarked, eyeing her younger sister in some perplexity. 'I've never seen you so washed-out looking, nor so cross either; evidently you are overtired.'

'I haven't got such pleasant things to dream about,' said Cissy, with a short laugh.

'You mean about the Gooseberry, of course. I have just been wondering whether Adela does think that so very pleasant.'

'He isn't a Gooseberry!' burst out Cissy vehemently. 'Don't call him so! It's a horrid, foolish name, and I won't let him be so ridiculously nicknamed!'

'But you invented the name yourself, Cissy.'

'No, I didn't, and if I did it was before—I mean when I didn't understand things, and now I can't bear it.'

This time Philippa did not answer immediately, but sat staring at her sister's flushed face with an astonishing idea slowly dawning in her mind. Last night already Cissy had puzzled her, and this was evidently but the continuation of last night's mood. Was the key to this enigmatical state of mind to be found in the word whose enunciation had just evoked this flash of excitement? It was an almost incredible idea, or so it appeared to Philippa, to whom, despite the long dresses, Cissy had always remained 'the child,' and who forgot that the atmosphere in which she had been living lately was one in which it is difficult to remain a child at all points for long,—especially when one's sixteenth birthday is approaching.

Having eaten almost as many *marrons glacés* as she cared for, Cissy had in fact lately been beginning to live into her grown-up *role* in a manner that no one yet credited her with. The air of a dancing-room with its many insinuating suggestions, its very luxury and warmth, has a certain resemblance to the air of a hothouse, in so far as goes the developing of instincts which else might have lain dormant for long, and prematurely exciting feminine nerves, and Cissy had not passed through it with impunity. The thrill which had gone through her at the moment when on the day of Ophelia's disappearance her hand had been so vigorously pressed, was a seed which had fallen on carefully prepared ground. In Cissy's case it was not the usual law of contrasts that was at work, for the hair of the Gooseberry had scarcely more colour in it than her own, while his short, blunt nose belonged unmistakably to the same race

as hers ; but the breadth of those Herculean shoulders had made a far deeper impression than she was aware of for long, and, more even than their community of tastes, the suggestion of strength under the outward limpness had proved irresistible to her unripe imagination.

At all this Philippa only dimly guessed, yet enough to bring her near to the truth. As in a flash she saw Cissy's face again as she now remembered having seen it during yesterday's ball—strained and evidently watching, and without the colour which Adela had predicted would come with dancing. So that was what she had been watching, poor child—no wonder if she was cross to-day. Without quite knowing why she did it, Philippa got up and went towards her sister, meaning to take her in her arms and kiss her, stroke her hair, press her hands—do anything that might occur to her at the moment. But she had scarcely touched her when Cissy, with astonishing dexterity, had slipped from her hands and run from the room.

It was most distressing, thought Philippa, coming to a standstill in the middle of the floor, but this unforeseen circumstance could not alter the course of events ; and with this thought in her mind she presently made her way to the room in which Evelyn and Adela slept together.

The blind was half drawn up, as she saw on softly opening the door, but there was no movement in either bed. The first her eye fell upon was Evelyn's, and she saw at once that it was empty. The house-shoes lying on the floor and the button-hook which had slipped down beside them seemed to indicate that outdoor boots had lately been put on. Off to her painting lesson, no doubt ; really Evelyn's zeal was of a model description.

Looking towards the other bed Philippa could distinguish a blotch of gold on the pillow, and drawing near stood still again, and gazed down tenderly at Adela's sleeping figure. With her fair eyelashes resting on her faintly flushed cheek, and her rounded bosom softly rising and falling, she was lovely to look at indeed, and mentally comparing her to the man who aspired to be her husband, Philippa could not at that moment keep the idea of Beauty and the Beast from pressing itself forward.

While she thought so Adela, turning on her pillow, raised a pair of sleepy eyes to her sister's face.

'Well, I *do* call that a proper sleep,' laughed Philippa,

stooping and giving her a quick little kiss on the forehead. 'Do you know what o'clock it is, Adela?'

'Oh, anything it likes,' said Adela, yawning luxuriously. 'I do feel so deliciously comfortable.'

'Only comfortable, Adela,—nothing else? Have you nothing to tell me about last night?'

Adela was rubbing her eyes. 'Last night? Oh, is it last night already? It's over, then? What a pity! I do wish it could begin again.'

Philippa sat down on the edge of the bed, and a little nervously clutched at Adela's hand.

'Adela, dearest, tell me the truth—did Lord Maurice not speak to you last night?'

'Of course he did—a lot.' And into Adela's usually so mild blue eyes there came a tiny gleam of mischief.

Philippa frowned. 'You know what I mean, Adela; did he say nothing especial?'

'N—o,' faltered Adela, colouring under her sister's almost severe gaze. 'Not quite.'

'But very nearly? I understand. Then he will say it next time he sees you, and that will probably be very soon.'

'Well, he *did* say something about calling this afternoon,' admitted Adela.

'And yet you sleep on as peaceably as though there were no such things as proposals in the world? Well, you are strange, Adela. It can't be quite indifferent to you, surely, whether or not this is the day that is to decide your fate.'

'Oh, but I've decided that already,' said Adela quickly.

'You know already what you mean to say to him?'

'I can only say that—that I can't marry him.'

Philippa sat intent for a minute playing with Adela's white fingers.

'Why can't you marry him?'

'Because—well, simply because——'

'You can't say you don't *like* him,' put in Philippa almost defiantly. 'You have often said you liked him, and you are not going to deny, are you, that you have enjoyed his visits as much as any of us?'

'Yes, but not *more*,' said Adela, unwittingly touching the kernel of the matter. 'I do like him—very much indeed, but I can't help fancying that it isn't quite the right sort of liking. I am sure, at any rate, that it is not the same way that he likes me.'

With her head thrown back on her pillow and her white throat displayed, Adela was staring perplexedly at the ceiling.

‘But are you also quite sure that you could not get to like him that way in time?’

‘Not unless he could get another pair of eyes and another complexion.’

But Philippa was feeling far too serious to have patience with any such approach to levity.

‘Adela, really I am astonished at you! As if a man’s worth depended on his complexion! Lord Maurice has surely got mental qualities enough to make up for any merely physical deficiencies. You are a little too fastidious even for a beauty—and you know that beauties often remain old maids, just because of being too hard to please. What better offer could you possibly have, merely from a worldly point of view? And so unmistakable a devotion ought not to be thrown aside in this offhand manner. Surely he has deserved better of us than that—think of all his kindness, of all the trouble he has taken! You cannot want to be quite ungrateful. At the very least he has deserved that you should carefully consider his proposal, and not reject it straight off, just because the colour of his eyes doesn’t happen to suit you.’

Philippa had come here without any fixed plan of persuading her sister, but almost before she had realised the drift of her own arguments she found that she was doing it. Her task was all the easier because of the reflection that it could not be wrong to push Adela, even a little against her own will, into the arms of so true a man as she instinctively felt Lord Maurice to be.

‘I don’t want to be ungrateful,’ said Adela, moving uneasily on her pillow. ‘I tell you that I like him——’

‘Very much,’ eagerly completed Philippa. ‘You said so yourself. And how do you know that this liking may not develop into a real sentiment for him? How do you know that it is not the beginning of the real sentiment already? In your ignorance you may be throwing away your own happiness, just because of a passing caprice, and may live to regret it ever after, for I don’t believe you would ever find a more really tender and high-minded husband than Lord Maurice. Now, can you deny that he is both tender and high-minded?’

‘No—he is all that,’ agreed Adela ungrudgingly, but a good deal troubled.

'And just hopelessly devoted to you. If you could only have seen the look on his face yesterday as he watched you dancing, whenever he was not your partner—something so yearning and yet so sad. I wonder how he would bear the blow of a refusal? I am afraid it would cut him up awfully.'

'Oh, I hope not,' cried Adela in sudden compassion. 'I do so hate hurting people.'

'You will hurt somebody very much to-day if you keep to your present resolution, and on the other hand you could make somebody very happy by reconsidering it.'

'Oh, dear me, what am I to do?' cried Adela. She was aware of having tried very hard to get up an affection for Lord Maurice and of not having succeeded. The very qualities which had commended him to the more robust Cissy had made it impossible for the fastidious and æsthetic Adela to fall in love with him. Unable to be quite convinced by Philippa's arguments and yet too weak to stand against her influence, she was at this moment in sore perplexity. It was from Philippa that she had been accustomed to receive her order and her opinions almost since she was a child—Philippa who had prescribed to her her hours of work and of play—was it so very preposterous that she should prescribe to her her husband as well? And then there was the real pity for the man for whom she felt a real sympathy, and which pressed her in the same direction.

'I thought I had quite made up my mind,' she said disconsolately; 'but now all my ideas are getting mixed up again. Oh, Phil dear, what am I to do?'

'Supposing you were to put it to Lord Maurice,' suggested Philippa. 'Just tell him that you like him, but are not sure of liking him enough, and leave it to him to decide whether he is content with the chance of its developing into the same sort of thing he feels for you.' In her own mind Philippa felt quite quiet about Lord Maurice taking that chance.

'That might do,' said Adela, thankful for any way out of the difficulty. 'I suppose that would be quite fair.'

'I think it would—that is to say, if you are quite sure that you don't care for any one else more.'

'No, I am quite sure of that,' said Adela readily, and her untroubled blue eyes seemed to underline the words. It is not always the forms most apt to inflame other hearts that themselves conceal the most inflammable sort of heart.

Philippa stooped and kissed her.

'Thank you, Adela. It will not be Lord Maurice alone whom you will be making happy by saying Yes this afternoon.'

'Would you be happy *too*?' asked Adela, looking at her sister's brightening eyes.

'Very glad, at any rate ; and not only because I feel so sure of Lord Maurice, but also because I should be relieved of such a host of bothers. I am afraid we have all been rather foolish, Adela ; but if you really feel that you can marry Lord Maurice, then it need not matter. Remember, that if things go wrong it will all be my fault, and that it is upon my head that the punishment ought to fall.'

'It shall not fall, Phil dear, if I can help it,' said Adela, pulling down Philippa's face to a level with her own. She did not quite follow what her sister dimly hinted at, but she understood that something was wrong, which her marriage with Lord Maurice would put right again, and in that moment she made up her mind to do as Philippa wanted, and to make both her and Lord Maurice happy—that very afternoon, if necessary.

(To be continued.)

WOMEN OF OTHER NATIONS.

II.—FRENCHWOMEN.

MADAME DE MAINTENON, writing on the education of girls, says : ‘ Do not trouble yourself about the cultivation of their minds ; they should be taught domestic duties, obedience to husband, and care of children : reading does more harm than good, it excites insatiable curiosity.’ Balzac, in 1833, exclaims with some sarcasm, ‘ The education of girls is such a grave problem—for the future of a nation is in its mothers—that for a long time past the University of France has not ventured to think about it.’ Between the time of these two expressions of opinion a masterly inactivity had been maintained. The Empire did nothing for the instruction of women, and the clerical party in the past has always discouraged their higher education. It was not till after the terrible reverses which followed the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War that any great progress was made. All education received a stimulus from the idea that its absence had been one of the factors in the misfortunes of the country, and this improvement has not been confined to one class or sex. Education grants made under the Republic have greatly raised the condition of both men and women teachers, and in 1880, after a long struggle on the part of M. Camille Sée, one of the most devoted advocates the cause of women’s education has had, something more than elementary teaching was at last established for the girls of France. National education was enormously developed, and its spirit completely revolutionised by the great Act of 1884, and now those who control it, instead of having an inimical spirit to contend with, cannot go fast enough along the way to excellence.

In elementary education France is on a level with ourselves, and, indeed, ahead of us on some important points. The school buildings are of the very best, the appliances are excel-

lent. Both the girls' and infant schools are visited by lady inspectors, who are a regular part of official organisation. The girls who attend the primary schools belong to much the same class as our Board Schools' population; the daughters of servants, artisans, small tradespeople, and children of the poorest class. Formerly the education of girls was entirely in the hands of nuns, and little was learned beyond needlework, the Catechism, and reading and writing. Twenty-five years ago numbers of women in the working classes could neither read nor write. Now all that is changed. More than 50,000 elementary schools are at work, the teacher's certificate is in every case obligatory, and even within the convent walls the diploma can no longer be dispensed with.

Every primary school possesses a *cantine*, from which meals at cost price are supplied to those pupils who do not return home for dinner, while those who have no dinner to return to can obtain dinner tickets and tender them without any one knowing that they are being fed at the cost of the State. As the French have no Poor Law, this becomes one of their methods of distributing relief, and the State insists that in the interests of the health of the population each child should have at least one good meal a day. All public schools are now non-sectarian by the decree of the Third Republic, but in many places voluntary schools for the poor have been started by the priests and nuns, where the teachers must hold a certificate, and the *installation* and hygiene must be up to Government standard. As a matter of fact, simple prayers often begin and end school hours in the *lycées*, or communal schools, the Catechism is taught after school to the children whose parents desire it, and the women teachers especially are often sincerely religious. The teaching is on the whole better in the *lycées* than in the voluntary schools, especially for girls, and the certificate for the teachers answers to that of our College of Preceptors.

The girls look very neat in the universal blouse or overall of black linen or woollen stuff, and a great deal of physical exercise and musical drill enters into their work. This is all the more essential, as the hours would be considered long in England—8.30 to 11.30, and 1 to 5 in the afternoon.

In France, two grades of elementary education are provided for. The primary school, or *lycée*, is intended for all children, but provides the entire education necessary for those who must

leave at thirteen to earn their own living. The Higher Grade, or college, offers a three years' course, which begins after the certificate for primary study has been obtained. There are also the technical schools, or *écoles professionnelles*, for girls, open to that large class for whom technical training is an all important consideration. A certain foundation of domestic training is supplied in all these, after acquiring which the pupil devotes herself to some chosen profession—laundry work, dressmaking, millinery, embroidery, cookery, design. The professional training is imparted in a most exact and complete manner, so that a girl is turned out completely equipped for the task she has decided to undertake, whether it be elaborate, machine-sewn embroidery, or exquisite artificial flowers for the London markets, or the cookery which makes every landlady of a village *auberge* a *cordon bleu* compared to the English plain cook.

At the evening schools in many great towns there is no subject, technical, literary, artistic, or scientific, that the scholars of both sexes may not learn free of cost. The boys and girls even in the public elementary schools are always in separate buildings, with exclusively male teachers for the boys and women for the girls.

The private boarding-schools of France, in which a proportion of the rich are educated, are almost always convent schools. The moral and religious teaching in them is highly valued, and the sisters are usually women of good birth and breeding, who give careful attention to the health and manners of their charges, and the education itself is thorough. Nuns join a teaching order not because they want to earn a living, but because they are conscious of a vocation for the work. The "religious" has a large variety of occupations open to her, and if she deliberately chooses the tuition of the rich, she does so because she has special gifts for dealing with young girls, for sympathising with and influencing them, and she would not be accepted unless able to convince the Superiors that she possessed such powers. The teaching orders exact the possession of a Government diploma. After passing the ordinary novitiate of conventual life, the nun who has chosen teaching in preference to any other work goes through a further novitiate lasting from two to five years, in which she is specially trained to teach. Her gifts are carefully tested, and her talents cultivated to the utmost. Great importance is

attached to her appearance and manners, which must be attractive, cheerful, and dignified, and she must have a lucid and agreeable faculty for expressing herself. The convent teacher is without care for the future, and exempt from all domestic cares and worries which weigh upon the ordinary secular teacher.

A large proportion of the girls brought up in convent schools are motherless. Some belong to families who spend the summer and autumn on their country estates, and are in Paris only in the winter and spring. When in Paris these parents visit their children twice a week, and take them out driving and walking. The hours are long, and usually begin at 7.30, but there is an hour and a half for dinner and a romp in the open air. When a French girl is educated in a convent she enters at about four or five years, and remains a pupil till her education is finished. Her teachers get to know her thoroughly. They are well acquainted with her mother, who has very likely been educated at the same place; they study her, know and love her, and she is usually devoted to them.

Many of the girls of the upper classes are educated at home. They have a governess, very often an English one, and go to '*cours*'—courses of classes and lectures. One of their parents, the governess, or a maid, always accompanies them to these. No French girl ever walks alone or with only her young companions. It is no unusual thing for a fashionable mother to give up three or four afternoons a week to sitting through her daughter's lesson hours. A French girl's school life is a quiet time, with childlike pleasures and only short vacations; six weeks in summer, a few days at Easter and the New Year, are the only breaks except Sunday and the often-recurring saints' days. The course of study is laid down with great care, and pursued calmly and steadily, infinite pains being taken that there should be no strain, and that the pupil should not be overworked; there is no reading of novels, no going to parties, dances, or theatres, the French girl is accustomed to early hours, plain food, simple dress, and unexciting pleasures. No sentimental vagaries are allowed to distract her. She rarely speaks to any man other than her nearest relations, and she is encouraged to throw her whole energy and enthusiasm into her school work, her affection for home, and her friendships with her little companions. Such an education goes a long way to account for the excellent health of most Frenchwomen and their freedom from nerves and anæmic troubles.

Of all the subjects taught, a thorough knowledge of the French language is given the most prominent place, together with a complete course of French history and an acquaintance with the best masters of French literature. Classics and mathematics are rarely taught, but if a French girl learns nothing else, she may expect to leave school with a perfect and cultivated knowledge of her own tongue, and will be able to write and express herself with ease, grace, and accuracy. The teaching is chiefly by lectures and oral examinations, and there is a great deal of open discussion in class, when *how* a pupil says a thing is as much considered as *what* she says. The historical course embraces a great deal of religious instruction, such as the history of the early Church, the great schisms of East and West, the history of Protestantism and the Vatican, and many girls make a (for them) serious study of ethics and theology. A whole year is often given to the study of France itself, its departments, system of taxation, resources, industries, and general administration, a grounding which enables women to take an intelligent share in public affairs in after life. Rich children often take up some special charitable work—a convalescent home, a home for poor working girls, or the charge of an orphan—and this is the object of much steady work and devotion. Music and drawing, when taken up, are pursued in a very thorough manner, and many women in private life play and paint as well as professionals, without their proficiency exciting much comment.

In no country do children live in such intimate companionship with their parents as in France. They have no separate life in the family ; all the meals are taken together, and conversation has to be carefully adapted to the *jeune fille*. A French girl often passes every hour of her day, out of lesson-time, at her mother's side, sleeps in her room until the day of her marriage, and has not a thought that her mother does not know. As French families often do not exceed two or three children, there is less of the rub of all ages and dispositions, and the devotion and harmony of family life is one of its most charming features. This is partly to be attributed to the fact that French girls are taught from infancy to say the pleasant thing, and to be polite on all occasions, to think before she speaks, and studiously to refrain from telling home-truths. Such idiomatic phrases as 'I think you ought to know,' 'It is only kind to tell you,' are unknown in the French home, where the *vérité vraie*

is reserved for great occasions, and where rough, half-jesting rudeness between brothers and sisters would not be tolerated.

The French girl is brought up from infancy with the almost absolute certainty that she will be married. Marriage is, more or less consciously, the end and aim of her existence. Though her intercourse with men is limited to meeting her nearest relations, yet the prospect is an openly acknowledged one. '*Si tu veux te marier, ne fais jamais ça,*' '*Cela t'empêchera de te marier,*' are phrases of common occurrence. Marriage does not occupy so large a share of a young girl's thoughts as in many countries, and its attainment depends not at all upon her own efforts, but it does not occur to the French girl that she will *not* marry, and from her birth her *dot* has been planned and kept in sight, her parents finding in it their greatest incentive to economy.

It is most difficult for French people to realise the existence of a really celibate class, apart from the religious professions. The idea that a large number of young women should, from choice or necessity, live as 'nuns in the world' is to them unnatural and altogether wrong. 'Society has hitherto made no provision for the *vieille fille*,' says a recent writer. 'The position she occupies in England and America, of usefulness, power, and agreeable enjoyment, is incomprehensible to the French mind; she is an eccentric exception to the order of nature, an improbability with which it is not necessary to reckon.' Of late years this position has become slightly modified, and a Frenchwoman who has made it quite clear that she does not wish to marry (for a choice, however unpalatable a one, will always be given her) is, towards thirty, given more liberty, goes about freely, and is allowed to have her own money, but she is expected to behave accordingly and to leave the assumption and pursuits of youth behind her.

In some ranks, principally in the *haute bourgeoisie*, the introduction of what are supposed to be English manners has done something towards converting the French *ingénue* into the *demoiselle libre*, who is certainly not a fortunate copy of our frank, well-bred English girls. A young lady like this has perfected her education by the surreptitious reading of yellow-backed novels, by gossip with indiscreet maids, and from the chatter of older companions. The 'Paulette' of Gyp is not an imaginary type, if she is a libel upon the majority of well-brought-up girls, who are usually almost laughably ignorant

of the main facts of life. There is a curious exception to this delicacy, in a certain coarseness of speech in French circles, strange to English ears. Jokes and allusions are openly made in otherwise refined families which would be thought broad, and even indecent, in any respectable housekeeper's room in this country.

The French *débutante* goes to *bals blancs*, where she dances with carefully selected partners, and never twice with the same. At the end of the dance her partner returns her with a bow to her chaperon. If a bolder spirit than the rest should invite her to go to the *buffet*, she must ask permission, and if this is granted, her mother follows on the arm of another cavalier and keeps her in sight. She goes to carpet-dances with her young girl friends, where half the party represent the male sex by the wearing of red rosettes. If there are no ball-room triumphs, there are at least no mortifications, for no girl stands out, all are danced with in turn, and it would be considered the height of bad taste to show preference or neglect. There comes a day when the girl is invited to go with her mother to the house of some old friend, with the knowledge, or suspicion, that the young man she will meet there has made advances, and that her parents have satisfied themselves that he is a desirable *parti*. He has probably contrived to see her already, at the opera or at Mass, and has made minute inquiries about her dowry. These inquiries have been reciprocated ; his health, the health of his family, his character, conduct, and income have been reported upon, in strict confidence, by his friends, for this is an occasion for the *vérité vraie*, and it would be considered very treacherous to mask it where a marriage is in question. Sentimental flirtations and hopeless attachments before marriage have no existence ; the slightest attention to a girl in France immediately assumes a serious character, and no gentleman would dream of paying court to a girl without receiving her parents' sanction. After this first interview either may draw back, without exciting unfavourable comment, any slight excuse being accepted as final, but if all goes well the contract is proceeded with and after this it is very rare indeed for a marriage to be broken off. No girl who dissolved her engagement for the sort of reasons English girls are allowed to give, such as she had 'not known her own mind,' 'found she did not care enough,' &c., would have a second chance of marriage, but would be marked out as having behaved disgracefully. The engage-

ment seldom lasts more than a few weeks, during which the young couple meet constantly, but always in the presence of elders and guardians. They may sit and whisper in a corner of the salon, or pace up and down the terrace in sight of the windows of the château, but driving, riding, or paying visits together is a thing undreamt of. Ill-assorted unions, as regards age, are rare in France, and parents do not often give their young daughters to even an elderly man.

The parents' view of marriage, of course, is that a girl who has never known an attachment of any kind will naturally be attracted to her husband ; her mother was married in the same way, and it is undeniable that most young women, married on these respectable principles, make excellent wives, and that, the novels notwithstanding, French marriages are at least as happy as those of any other country. There could not be a stronger line of demarcation between Indian castes than there is between French classes. A marriage between a man and woman of different ranks is practically unknown, and one of the reasons which keeps them so distinct is the rigidity of the marriage laws and the power vested in the hands of the elder members of the family, who can forbid a woman's marriage till the age of twenty-one, and a man's till twenty-five, and who can, even after this, throw so many difficulties in the way that marriage, without the consent of the parents, at least is most troublesome of accomplishment.

Among peasant classes girls have as much freedom as in England. The institution of the '*parlement*' gives the lover the right to call on a girl and to dance with her as much as he pleases, but the *dot* is looked for with an equally keen eye, and something in the shape of one is generally forthcoming in the humblest ranks.

The young French married woman's life is not always one of such complete emancipation as is generally supposed. Those who make rich marriages and come at once into their kingdom are still the exception. The young married woman generally spends at least half her life with her husband's relations. The young couple is often not rich, living is expensive, and it is a convenient economy to live for a great part of the year in the château or the hôtel of the head of the family. English people are surprised to find that this plan works so well on the whole ; its success is largely to be attributed to that ignoring of the necessity for unpalatable

truth-telling already noticed and the understanding that no one repeats anything unpleasant that one person says of another. On the other hand, in many cases the wife suffers much from a custom it is not easy to oppose. Whatever the young wife's position in life, she is expected to take an active interest in her household when she has one, and when she has children to be much more in and out of the nursery than an English woman of the upper classes would be. The superior British nurse who resents interference, but who can on the whole be trusted, does not exist abroad, where the *fille-mère* as nurse is too common, so that the mother, who is almost invariably devoted to her babies, is obliged to give a good deal of time and thought to her nursery, and the gayest and most worldly will often have passed her early morning superintending the bathing and dressing of her little ones.

Frenchmen are very fond of their homes : they have little club life, no political life unless they happen to be deputies, and there is none of that civic, social interest which brings men together in an English village or country town. There is no sport and few outdoor pursuits, except within a limited circle of society. Consequently a Frenchman expects his wife to be his constant companion, and when his day's work is over to share in all his amusements and occupations. The whole family generally spends the afternoon or evening together, taking walks, making excursions, or sight-seeing. Women in Paris are showing some signs of following American and Englishwomen's example in starting clubs. At least one exists, adapted to the requirements of professional women, journalists, artists, professors, &c. ; while another very large one is purely a social club and is patronised by the smart set of Parisian society.

When a Frenchwoman has married her daughters and her husband has his sons as companions, she has more time to herself, and then often devotes herself to philanthropic work.

The 'higher education' has made great strides of late years, and there are numbers of studious, hard-working women with serious ideas about the position of their own sex. In 1889 there were 16,000 in France who had taken the veil, a considerable number of these being cloistered, but wider fields for usefulness have now opened, and the spread of education has diminished these numbers. University education was secured long before the intermediate ; in fact, no rule against women entering

any university has ever existed. From 1866 to 1896 about two hundred degrees have been conferred upon women. The first Frenchwoman, Mdle. Verneuil, graduated from the Paris Medical School in 1870, and now large numbers of women are practising medicine both in Paris and the provinces. More study every year for degrees and many hold Government and municipal appointments, and at least one woman, Mdle. Louise Chauvin, has established the right to practise as a lawyer. The studios and exhibitions are full of women who make a serious profession of art and whose art is seriously judged. Fifty years ago a woman who became an author did so in defiance of prejudice or with a desire to make a noise in the world, or she sheltered herself behind a male pseudonym. In 1892 there were about two thousand women writers in France, of these some 230 were journalists, but all but seven were on *journaux de modes*. To-day *La Fronde*, a daily paper of serious interest, is edited, managed, and printed by women. They write on any subject, their work is judged by exactly the same standard as that of men; in fact, in no country do you hear less talk of 'women's work'; good or bad work is the only question.

'In no other country of Europe,' writes M. Paul Foucart, 'does woman, in proportion to her situation, work so hard as in France; nowhere else does she, in every grade of society associate herself so closely with her husband in his efforts for the moral and material welfare of the family.' As a woman of business she excels. In no country do women occupy such important and independent positions in trade. It is not only the great financial operations that have been carried through in many instances, such as the notable undertaking of the foundress of the Bon Marché, but in the background of every small *magasin*, at the desk of the restaurant, in the *comptoir* of the rising hotel, you descry *Madame*, smiling, alert, firm, unrelaxing in vigilance, politeness, and resource, keeping the books, sending out the bills, advising her husband, conversant with every turn of his business, contributing the largest share to its stability. From the great financier, or the place-seeker, down to the humble peasant proprietor, each consults his wife, entrusts her with his secrets, secure that she will never be betrayed into an indiscretion or lose sight of his interests. As every one is liable to the faults of their qualities, this thrift and industry doubtless develops too often into the greed, love of money, and the inordinate wish to save, which are sometimes

quoted as among the least amiable characteristics of the nation.

It is remarkable that while women in France occupy such a high place in men's estimation, the law respecting them is so unequal. The Revolution deviated widely from its principles when it established their legal status. The preliminary remarks on marriage in the famous Napoleonic Code are largely taken from the writings of Rousseau, in which he discusses the theory of woman considered as a child ; little important modification has been made in the Code. By its dictation, a married woman loses her independence and becomes incapable of ownership.

'Of the different matrimonial systems placed by the Code at the disposition of the contracting parties,' writes Mr. Theodore Stanton in his 'Woman Question in Europe,' 'none guarantees woman's liberty. Under none may the wife act in regard to her property with the same freedom as the most ignorant man. In one case—the system of "community of goods"—she is treated as if weak-minded and in need of a committee ; in another—the system by which each spouse is left the separate owner of his or her property—she is looked upon as a prodigal requiring a guardian.' Every article in her favour is vitiated by some counter provision or reservation in the Code, which decrees that all action must be deferred to the husband as 'marital authority.' A wife separated from her husband may not alienate her real estate without his consent. As long as the father lives, he alone enjoys authority over the children, while the mother has no legal powers. 'The widow is indeed made the legal guardian of her children, but her husband may impose upon her an adviser, without whose consent she cannot exercise the duties of guardianship,' while if she marries again she loses all legal hold over them. A married woman cannot be a member of the family council, that important institution in France ; she cannot witness a legal document or call a public meeting ; and in other classes of offences the doctrine of the law presses with equal harshness upon the weaker sex.

Yet, with all this theoretical inequality, or, perhaps because of it, French juries are extraordinarily favourable where feminine applicants and offenders are concerned. In family matters, too, Frenchwomen play a supreme part. Nowhere is age treated with such deference, or the experience of the elders so consulted. As a woman advances in years her power increases, so that in hundreds of thousands of French families

the '*aïeule*,' as the grandmother, or sometimes the great-grandmother, is styled, becomes a sort of autocrat over her descendants, and even the older men ask her advice and sanction in all the chief affairs of life, and this will be as true of an old peasant as of an old princess.

All readers of French novels must have noticed how conspicuous is the importance assigned to the aged mother, whether it is the Marquise d'Alaly or the old Breton fishwife. The deference paid by Frenchmen to their mothers and grandmothers is always striking: they may be held in awe or their authority evaded, but outward respect and consideration are never lacking.

In the exercise of charity and philanthropy Frenchwomen appear in the most amiable of lights. In the provinces it is said that charity is too much neglected, but in Paris an immense amount of it is carried on by large-hearted women. Much is in the interests of their own sex. The Philanthropic Society has been a blessing to poor women for 118 years; some years ago Mme. Camille Faure enabled it to open dispensaries for children in all parts of Paris. The Society for the Amelioration of the Conditions of Women has philanthropic as well as political aims: that for the relief of female prisoners befriends those who leave the great women's prison of St. Lazare. One lady has created a folding-room in connection with one of the best-known publishing houses, where two hundred poor women are fed and given 10 per cent. on the savings they deposit, and other business societies have been organised on the same lines. An Association of Ladies is pledged to care for the sick and wounded in time of war, and unobtrusive, private charity is widespread, to say nothing of fashionable committees, charitable bazaars and *quêtes*, nor can we leave out the work of the Sister of Charity, which is often admirable. Her knowledge of pharmacy and medical treatment of the sick has had much to do with the willingness of the public to receive women as doctors, not but what she is apt to be something of a quack, and as such is a formidable rival of the young country practitioner, who she sometimes starves out of existence. A serious indictment, too, is brought by some writers against the system of conventual orphanages and industrial schools, which are alleged to constitute a wholesale abuse of child labour and a competition crushing to the ordinary seamstress. Those who admire the

exquisite needlework done in French convents may do well to consider the words of one who has long lived in the country, that 'one must have inspected those dreary prisons to realise what the life of the young creatures pent up in them is like ; the toil to which they are condemned till they leave at the age of twenty-one is of the most monotonous description. No training is given for domestic service or for life generally,' and the writer adds, 'it would be interesting to see on paper the net profits to the convent of a girl's earnings for ten years.'

Life in a provincial town is respectable, simple, and indeed often extremely dull. 'Society' is mainly Parisian, and in society some line is still drawn between the old aristocracy and the modern set, though not so strong a one as there used to be. The fast woman is to be seen everywhere, as well as the woman of the world who is not fast—at races, at *les eaux*, at first nights, hunting, driving, fencing, acting, shooting, introducing new fashions, and stopping short of no extravagance of conduct and expenditure. The line in French opinion, however, is very rigidly drawn between the irreproachable woman and the *femme légère*. The kind of flirtation that goes on in the idle world of England, and which is generally taken to be less serious than it may look, would be given no benefit of the doubt in France, where this sort of intercourse can hardly be said to exist. On the other hand, devoted friendships between men and women are common, and a man may drop in almost every day to chat at a house where he has become an *habitué* without exciting comment.

The old days of the salon are over, but the '*art de tenir salon*' will never die in Paris. Most Frenchwomen have ease, grace, and polish in conversation. They can both talk and listen well, and understand art, literature, and politics. An English *savant* of the present day says that the reason there is no good conversation now is that society being so large, the same persons rarely meet to rub wits together. This is not the case in Paris, where the same friends will dine together week after week, and where the circles are much smaller and more intimate, and may be one of the reasons why French conversation is still so good : light in hand, incisive and witty.

Frenchwomen of all ranks are remarkable for their good

health. All have a horror of invalidism, which they class with nerves and hysteria. There is no talking over ailments as a topic of interest, and the 'lady's doctor' does not find his occupation a specially lucrative one. It is customary to allow that Frenchwomen excel in the art of dress. Englishwomen, who have improved in this way of late years, may question this supposed superiority, but it is certain that none are so consistent and well-ordered in their management of it as the French. *Luxe de toilette* is carried to the highest point by a certain number of the rich and extravagant everywhere, but in France, the woman who has little to dress upon will lay her plans with a circumspection and carry them out with a self-restraint unknown to the average Englishwoman. While she takes an infinity of pains, she allows herself no vagaries, is carried away with no sudden extravagances, succumbs to no temptations at 'sales,' and is not led on to copy fashions unbecoming to herself, or out of keeping with her other possessions. She will not buy a jacket because one like it looked so well on Mme. Une Telle, or a brilliant hat if she habitually walks in the street, or a mantle which goes with none of her dresses because it is a bargain. She is scrupulous over boots and gloves, she goes to a fashionable *corsetière*, her *lingerie* is copied by a little workwoman from one or two fashionable models, but her dresses, her bonnets, her dainty petticoats, are made by some little *modiste à trois sous*, who may work in an attic, but who is an artist in her line and who will study a picturesque sleeve from the pictures in the Louvre or catch up the last cry of fashion from a passing glimpse of one of the latest creations of a great *faiseur*. A Frenchwoman cannot condone carelessness in such a vital matter. To be *tiré à quatre épingles* on all occasions is to her of the last importance, and she and her dressmaker exchange shocked confidences over the revelations of clumsy and unbecoming *dessons* of many a rich and prosperous English customer.

Coquetry is a virtue in the eyes of a French man or woman, and a large share of the woman's attention is devoted to preserving her looks and her charm. The wish to be an ornament to society and never to lose her character as a charming woman is the central motive of her existence. It is for this that she devotes so much attention to dress rather than for any passion for it in itself. Even into a professional

or artistic career she will carry this instinctive coquetry, and an invincible desire to please.

Mdme. Alphonse Daudet, in her charming '*Journées de Femmes*,' analyses the many exquisite graces which lie behind the apparently frivolous exterior of the Parisienne, who is, she says, the typical Frenchwoman, made up of a mixture of races, just as a unique family type is now obtained from successive photographs which reproduce the general features. 'Very few,' she says, 'have succeeded in divining in the fashionable woman of the evening the housekeeper of the morning and the mother of all day long. Those hands, gloved to the elbow, transparent rose and pearl when the gloves are taken off, have done the children's hair, arranged flowers, run through a book, perhaps cut out a layette. Before becoming the irreproachable dressmaker's doll she appears to be, she has visited the poor, read aloud to an infirm father, taken her eldest child to a Catechism, and despatched letters to friends and tickets to a charity bazaar.

'These charming people, of whom many practise some sport every morning, take great account of time. They seldom lose their minutes, even visits are cut very short, and here is heard sometimes a pregnant word on political news or the last dramatic or literary success. Often it is enough to pass through a drawing-room to learn in brief the events of the day, almost always pronounced upon with sure, quick judgment, for above all is French, the mixture of lightness with gravity, the power of passing rapidly over useless explanations and the gesture implying much or little. Yes, the Parisienne sums up the Frenchwoman. In calling together the virtues of various provinces, she knows how to keep house and to guide a family with a supple hand, and that without passing her life in menial offices and without sacrificing elegance in the turn of her phrases or her figure.'

It never occurs to a Frenchwoman to regret that she is not a man. She does not feel herself to be man's rival, but she is his equal and his companion to a degree seldom witnessed in other countries. She is for the most part satisfied that society should be ostensibly ordered with a view to his interests, and that the conditions of female influence should consist of social opportunity. This makes it difficult to arouse any strong or widespread feeling on the question of women's rights in France, though under the Third Republic this

question, like every other liberal measure, has gained in life and vigour.

In 1876 a Woman's Rights Society was formed, whose special aim was to secure the suffrage, and two other associations were organised in 1882, the principal object of the last being to improve the legal condition of women. Meetings have been held and petitions signed in favour of Women's Suffrage both in Paris and in the provinces, but the reformers have encountered much opposition. The free-thinking party is strong and active, and numbers of women of advanced views are members of the anti-clerical societies, which are multiplying every day. Those women who desire to obtain their rights and to secure independence are disposed to second the free-thinking movement, and this connection is on the whole adverse to the popularity of their views. The ordinary Frenchwoman is sincerely religious and devout, still a staunch upholder of the clerical party, and many still take their whole line of thought from the clergy of the Church of Rome.

In studying the French woman as a whole, one receives a forcible impression, which is confirmed by several writers, that she is very different from and very much more interesting than the French man. From her earliest years she has had a training entirely apart from his. She has been tutored to act and think by rule, though with the grace peculiar to her country. She is taught and practised till she knows exactly what it is right and fitting to do under every circumstance. The excitability, want of self-control, and violent extremes of emotion, which we associate with the men of France are entirely absent from her women. The great majority of Frenchwomen are perfectly *réglées*: well-ordered beings, simple with a simplicity that is the perfection of art, grafted on natural self-possession, methodical, restrained, finished in manner, and in every relation of life are to be found *à la hauteur de la situation*.

EVELYN MARCH PHILLIPPS.

THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.

A STORY OF GEORGIAN DAYS.

CHAPTER I.

THE GREAT WESTERN COACHWAY.

SUCH a trotting, ambling, cantering, prancing, frisking, rolling, bouncing, cracking, thwacking company did not every day pass Mistress Steggall's window, but it passed it upon all extraordinary occasions, and of these was the Queen's Birthday.

Mistress Steggall's window gave upon a road along which journeyed Londonwards the company at Bath that wanted to attend the Queen's Birthday, being, said Mistress Steggall, much nobility, and—much mob.

Mistress Steggall was a nobleman's daughter, whose marriage with Miles Steggall, merchant, had set whisperers asking: 'How was she induced to the connection?' To this question the whispered answer had been: 'By his superior fortune.'

As she stood in her window on this January day of 1776 the appearance of Miles Steggall's wife made abundantly evident what in her had won the affections of a man of known simplicity whom no woman would have made her lover by her superior rank.

Mistress Steggall was small, and what was termed genteelly-shaped, a fact which was not entirely, though it was partially, concealed by her dress, which was less that of 1776 than it was that of some twenty years prior. It was—so some of her friends said—the only part of pridefulness in Mistress Steggall to dress twenty years in arrear of the fashion, thus putting herself on a plane apart among wives of merchants, who, a hundred years ago, footed it, step by step, with Madam Mode. Thus the hoop of Miles Steggall's wife was almost a farthin-

gale, spreading itself all round with imposing majesty, and giving her an amplitude which, short as she was, would have made her seem much shorter had she not worn enormously high-heeled shoes. A little hand, with fingers of a charming taperness (her own expression), appeared from beneath full ruffles, attached to tight sleeves, which made the arms' slenderness somewhat too evident. Her waist ran to a point, and was cruelly compressed, though her gown for the rest was loose, to match its name of *sacque*.

Such was the indoor dress favoured by Mistress Steggall. When taking the air she wore a cloak with hoods, which she called a cardinal. She did not favour spencers.

A woman, this, of a strong individuality, to judge from her dress; and of a most sweet disposition, to judge from her expression. Such was the woman after Miles Steggall's heart.

The panorama which was unfolding itself before her on the day here in view was wonderful enough. The Great Western Railway line was still a thing undreamt of, wherefore the company at Bath that wanted to celebrate the Queen's Birthday in London was thrown upon its own resources in the way of instruments of locomotion.

London was distant a hundred and odd miles, but that fact did not deter the loyal Bathites from journeying thither. The flying coach—it flew, when at its top speed, at the rate of five miles an hour—took some. Their own flying or creeping coaches took others. Every wheeled thing in the town was called into requisition, a fact to which a gentleman who for some minutes took up his stand behind Mistress Steggall, and over her head took a survey of the road, drew attention in the words, spoken with a sneer which had a sharp edge to it, 'Here they come—coached, curried, calashed and carted!'

In simple truth, the roomy, cozy vehicle answering to the name of calash figured largely, and not quite inappropriately, in the procession, but the currie—that now defunct twin-brother of the gig—made little show in it. Two curries, however, chanced to be on the road, and Miles Steggall did not forego the opportunity which they afforded him of piling up alliteration.

'You do not think, Mr. Steggall, do you,' Mistress Steggall asked, 'that these gentlemen who are drove by themselves are driving to London?'

Mr. Steggall laughed inwardly. The fatuity in certain

matters of Mistress Steggall still took him by surprise, while it still pleased him. That she should not see to what extent his speech was merely rhetorical was matter to him for pleasurable reflection.

'Besides your way of being driven to London in your barouche and four, Mistress Steggall,' he said, 'there are many new ways come up of getting thither, and,' he added prophetically, 'without doubt there will come up many more. Heart! there is an overloaded coach that is like to break down by one of the braces giving way. Full thirty persons in and about it! Well, well, of these the half will have their legs and necks broke.'

The coach in question certainly presented an alarming appearance. For its outside passengers, of which it carried as many as there were passengers inside, there were no seats provided, and while some of them were literally stowed away with the luggage in the basket—a stout wicker arrangement attached to the rear of the vehicle—where they were subjected to excruciating tortures from jolting, others clung for bare life to each other on the top of the coach, insanely hoping to be thus able to preserve a balance the slightest shifting of which would result in their being precipitated to the ground. Saved as yet by a marvel from overturning, the over-loaded coach reeled on its way.

'Here comes another cock-boat,' Miles Steggall commented, as, swinging on its fearful path, another heavily freighted coach passed; 'and here comes, Mistress Steggall, your papa's hammer-cloth, not yet entirely snowed over.'

Mistress Steggall blushed vividly.

The cloth thrown over her father's coach-box was the only part of his equipage which was impressive, and it was impressive only by reason of the armorial bearings upon it. Four lank mares, driven by a shabby, shamefaced old man, who had driven the four mares when they had been less lank, pulled the tumble-down chariot on its way. In poverty's despite, however, the armorial bearings made a brave show, and it was without the slightest satirical intention that Miles Steggall in commenting upon his father-in-law's equipage had singled out the hammer-cloth. As he spoke he turned on his heel and left his wife, as he thought, alone in the window. The relations between him and Lord Arberton were not overtly inimical, but they were overtly so far from affectionate that

when, without ostentatious incivility, the thing could be left undone, the two men avoided greeting.

Remembering at the door that he had not effected his purpose in coming to this room, Miles Steggall said, with a formality which he only employed when the father in him was incensed—

‘I desire, madam, that when you next have talk with her, you will send your daughter to me, whom, since you will not trim, I will trim finely.’

This announcement met with no response, and next moment the door was shut upon the irate merchant. At the same moment the girl who was his daughter no less than Mistress Steggall’s emerged from what had been her hiding-place in the folds of the window drapery.

CHAPTER II.

A YOUNG GIRL IN JUDGMENT.

HESTER STEGGALL came forward with her finger on her lip, and having held it there for some twenty seconds, took it thence, combining with the action the sending of a kiss to her grave-faced mother, by whom she forthwith took up her position, smiling. Nothing was said for some moments, and the girl began to show impatience and vexation. Her manner of doing so drew a comment from her mother.

‘Love,’ that lady said gently, ‘you have a remarkable flirt with your petticoats which is like a hedge-sparrow’s with his wings, and is, I think, very unpretty in a young lady.’

The petticoats were no more agitated, and Hester, with a woful contraction of face, asked—

‘Are you, mama, angry with your daughter?’

‘No, love; but your papa is, and I would have you practise frugality, since he would.’

‘Fie, mama!’ came the impetuous reply to this. ‘To practise parsimony, and call it frugality—that is disgusting! My papa has money and to spare.’

This was very true. Miles Steggall had money in superfluity, and, as a rule, did not practise parsimony. When, however, he did, he called it frugality, and it was at such times his custom to upbraid his daughter, who was, mostly with his full approval, very lavish of her money.

Mistress Steggall looked out of window, and the girl, following the direction of her mother's eyes, broke into a laugh, of which she volunteered the explanation.

'I laugh, mama, at those two old fat gentlewomen who in their coach talk together of their cook-maids.'

'You cannot, Hester, hear their talk,' Mistress Steggall demurred.

'No, mama; but I can—see it.'

The wittiness of this was lost on Hester's mother, whose sweet face remained quite serious.

The girl continued in this highly spiced strain.

'Here comes Captain Wyvill, riding, his face in caricatura with a bluely red nose.'

The nose which was described as bluely red so burlesqued the Captain's face that even Mistress Steggall did not trust herself to continue looking at it, and it was with her gaze fixed studiously in another direction that she said—

'When I had acquaintance among gentlemen of the navy I never heard but good of Captain Wyvill.'

The 'when' which ushered in this speech gave Hester's thoughts a new turn.

'I wish, mama,' she said, 'you had acquaintance among gentlemen of the navy still.'

'I do not wish it, love,' her mother replied quietly, 'for what I look for in your husband is what I found in your papa, a genteel fortune and the fairest character.'

Hester's potential husband was so often spoken of by her mother that the mention of him in this speech did not surprise the young girl, neither did the priority given to a genteel fortune take her aback; howbeit she grimaced.

'"A genteel fortune and the fairest character"—it sounds deadlily dull,' she said. 'I shall like better to marry a poor gentleman who is very naughty, if only he is young and beauish.'

'You do not know that sort, love,' her mother said, passing her frail hand over the young head.

'I do not, mama,' the girl answered, 'but I know t'other, the sort that you would have me marry, a gentleman who is like papa: his talk, when he is in best humour, all only of the weather, and his employ to run 'twixt Dollond's glass and Martin's.'

The allusion was here to two thermometers.

'Rather than marry a gentleman like that,' the girl continued recklessly, 'I will be an old maid, and pass my life with cats and catesses.'

This was girl-phrasing in the style of Richardson's 'dogs and dogesses'; not that the girl here speaking had ever read a line of Richardson, but that she spoke the language which that novelist was so industrious in gathering from girls' lips.

'I, love, had been such an old maid,' Mistress Steggall replied, 'had your papa not made me an offer of marriage.'

This was the first intimation received by Hester that her mother had married late in life. She coloured, and said charmingly—

'I am so glad he did, for you are thus my mama !'

There was here a prolonged affectionate silence, then the girl spoke anew.

'I have not, mama, beauty, have I ?' she said.

'No, love,' was the answer. 'You have a bloomy prettiness' (this concession had reference to the girl's rosy colouring), 'but beauty is a proportion of parts, which you have not; your mouth, though sweet, being large, and your nose, though pleasing, small. Miss Eusebia Dicken, who just drives past, has beauty, having both perfectly proportioned features and fine colours.'

'Her fine colours are from complexionary measures,' the girl, whose bloomy prettiness was her own, said, with a toss of head.

'I did not know it,' Mrs. Steggall said simply. 'I hear, my dear, she is to marry a considerable person.'

'The match is broke off,' Hester replied. 'Her sister has told me so—the one who now drives with her. The person in their coach with them is a gentleman curious in birds. Miss Eusebia, 'tis said, will marry him.'

'Very like she will,' Mistress Steggall said dreamily.

The gossiping young girl's eyes brightened, and she exclaimed—

'Mama !'

'Yes, love.'

'See who comes in a chaise and—one !'

The pause intensified the sneer, which met its counterpart in the insolent look which the person thus equipaged levelled at the window at which stood Mistress Steggall and her daughter.

'She looks unkindly at us, Hester'—Mistress Steggall spoke with manifest difficulty—'and, like the most of my family, has not smiled on me since my marrying.'

'It matters not, for when she smiles 'tis only to discover her teeth,' the girl said angrily, and using phrasing of fuller significance than she was aware, for she did not mean to bring against her mother's kinswoman, as in point of fact she did bring against her, a charge of vanity and cruelty combined. 'I wonder she likes to drive where women and ladies are so mixed together,' she added satirically.

Nothing whispered to Hester that the distinction which she herself drew between women and ladies had not its basis in humility. At this point in her philippics she acknowledged with a radiant smile a gentleman's salute.

'Do I know this gentleman's name?' her mother asked a little disingenuously.

'Tis Mr. Morgan,' was answered airily.

'Mr. Morgan?' Mistress Steggall repeated the name with a meditative expression. 'Do you know if he is of the Monmouth Mr. Morgans? Their money which they inherited would not be divided by tale, but only by shovelful, and one of their ancestors was drawn to St. James' by a set of horses shod with silver.'

The girl laughed merrily.

'I know, mama, he is not of these,' she said, 'but is of the other Mr. Morgans, of whom there are as many, he says, in Monmouth as there are Mr. Smiths in Somerset.'

'Is he, love, poor?' Mistress Steggall asked. A fortune-hunter was not a man to her taste.

'He is not, mama, I think, rich,' Hester answered.

'He doubtless looks to marry a rich young lady.'

'He has not told me so, mama.'

Mistress Steggall was silent for a minute, then embarked upon a piece of narrative the application of which was obvious.

'There is a woman sells shrimps at Billingsgate,' she said, 'who was married with a fortune of twenty thousand pounds to a poor gentleman, which he ran through and left her—Why are you, Hester, fallen in convulsions?'

'Heart, mama,' the girl said, vainly trying to steady her voice, 'at the picture you make of me as fish-woman at Billingsgate when Mr. Morgan shall have spent my twenty

thousand pounds, which will be never'—her voice changed—'for he has said to my friend, Amelia, that he will not make to a young gentlewoman whose hand at her birth was crossed with gold the offer of a hand that never was crossed with silver.'

'Proud words and pretty,' Mistress Steggall said; then, desirous to lead the talk into other channels, and, with this object in view, feigning a curiosity which she did not feel, she asked a question which gave a turn to affairs that was to benefit Ivor Morgan in a way he did not dream of.

CHAPTER III.

THE BODDAM FAMILY.

'WHO drives,' Mistress Steggall asked, 'in their chariot with the Boddam family? 'Tis, I think, a man of consequence.'

'He must be so to wear that heavy, sour look with ladies,' Hester said, with unconscious epigrammaticalness, and, genuinely interested in the Boddam family's newest acquisition to their circle of acquaintance, she added—

'I wish, mama, we knew his name! I hope he has not noticed how ill-shaped the Boddams' chariot is.' This was said as the chariot in question rolled heavily on its way. 'Tis no better than a post-chaise. Did you, mama, know the Boddam family was going to London?'

'No, love, I did not, but Mistress Boddam, I know, delights to be where the *beau monde* and *l'assemblée* are, which Mr. Boddam as little likes as your papa. Love, your papa desired to see you. Go now to him, and be upon your behaviour, I beg. Let only civility pass between you, dearest.'

Again the frail hand fluttered over the golden head.

'Why, heard you not, mama,' the girl asked, flushing, 'that he will trim me finely?'

'I did so, Hester, but your being soft and bland shall make him moderate his anger. Promise me, love, you will say nothing unbecoming a lady.'

'This is to promise that papa shall vent his spleen while I sit in a dumb tremblement. No, mama!'

Mistress Steggall sank into a chair. 'What, mama, ails you?' came at once the question.

'Love, I am frightened by you,' was the answer of the soft-souled, anxious mother.

The girl kissed her tenderly, then said gaily—

'Think no more of me, mama. The world runs on wheels.' This, the common speech passed among gentlemen driving, was said by Hester with a last look at the procession of vehicles which still filed past the house, and she added, 'We shall be running on wheels the next in our mulberry-coloured coach, for I am resolved that the Boddam family shall not make it their bravade that they were of the company at London while we remained at Bath.'

'My love, the works of men, they say, will be in a few hours quite overwhelmed,' Mistress Steggall replied, 'and the ground, upon which it snows without any drifting, will be against to-morrow covered fifteen inches.'

Hester's eyes sparkled.

'If that shall be so, the relation of our adventures,' she said, with spirit, 'will be at least as exciting as the relation of the Boddams'. I never could bear, mama, to snudge in quiet at home when all the world was abroad, and if I had only a chair and had my will, I would be carried to London in it by two Scotchmen rather than have to say when the Boddams are come home again—"Saw you their Majesties in town?" and be unable to hinder their saying "Yes."'

The mortification attaching to this imaginary situation was so far from striking Hester's mother as a slight thing that she did not offer any comment upon the girl's speech, except that contained in a sigh. She was not of Hester's sanguine disposition, and while with her mind's eye she still saw the Boddams' shabby chariot she did not see herself and Hester rapidly overtaking it in their mulberry-coloured coach. She turned round to express herself to this effect, and found that her daughter had left her.

Hereupon Mistress Steggall crossed the room, and seated herself at a pianoforte. The style in which she performed upon this instrument was one for which she prepared her audience when she was not playing to her family alone by telling them that she had not the rapid, brilliant finger *à la mode*, but was a tolerable timist. She had, in simple truth, no more brilliancy than a metronome, but she had also—excepting when strongly agitated—no less precision than it. On those occasions upon which, as now, she played to dispel maternal

anxiety, she ceased, however, to be even a tolerable timist. Her fingers threw off control, and music murdered in the gentlest manner formed the accompaniment to the conversation taking place in an adjacent room between Hester and her father.

CHAPTER IV.

HIGH WORDS.

'You are run into extravagance and folly,' so Mr. Steggall said angrily to his daughter, as he paced up and down a room in a corner of which Hester sat with folded hands. 'Your vanity and frivolism have well-nigh eased me of a round fortune. The loitering vaguities of Bath have entirely spoilt you.'

There was here a pause made. Hester, who had ridiculed the notion of succumbing to dumb trembling, did not open her lips, but pressed them tightly together. She also pressed her hands tightly together and her feet tightly together. The spectacle which she thus presented was so peculiar that her father asked—

'Are you, miss, fallen into a catalepsis?'

The lips were slowly parted, and the counter-query was made—

'What, sir, is that?'

'It is a disease where persons are suddenly seized without sense or motion, and remain in the same posture,' Mr. Steggall answered.

'Sir, do you wish me to stroam up and down the room with you?' his daughter said.

Mr. Steggall bit his lips. The word 'stroam'—one of the lost jewels of the English language—was a verb connoting masculinity, having its feminine synonyms in *flouncing* and *flinging away*. Hester, when she had not, as now, a definite object in view, was given to flouncing and flinging away, but stroaming was not in her line, necessitating, as it did, a longitude of step which her small dimensions made impossible.

Miles Steggall, who found nothing duller than a feud which resolved itself to a case of Miles quarrelling with Steggall, was not sorry at his daughter's breaking silence.

'You are, miss, a pert!' he said, coming to a standstill before the girl.

He wore a Ramilies tail to his wig, and its two immense bows which were reflected in a near mirror formed the most

striking point in his costume. His clothes were claret-coloured, which, worn with silver garters, he thought very handsome. His appearance was certainly very handsome, while, like that of his wife, lacking in modishness. He repeated his communication to his daughter—

‘You are, miss, a pert!’

The girl rose and curtsied, saying as she did so—

‘Thank you, sir, that is a proper compliment.’

Her curtsy was of such finished prettiness that her father asked—

‘Who is, miss, your dancing-master?’

‘Sir, I have none but Mr. Dukes’s “Book of Instructions,” which cost me ten shillings and sixpence.’

The ‘Book of Instructions’ of Mr. Dukes, a noted London dancing-master, was the only work of literature which Hester Steggall had ever bought for herself, and she never at this time or subsequently mentioned it without adding that it had cost her ten shillings and sixpence. It was her way of setting forth that she was not of those who will only spend large sums of money upon turbot. Her father, who was not himself a purchaser of books, allowed that this money had been well spent, but for the rest persisted in his assertion that Hester was run into extravagance and frivolism. The girl’s face expressed a protest at this insistence, and she said—

‘Papa, you are angry with me now ten minutes.’

‘And I am justly so, Hester.’

‘Hester!’ the girl echoed.

‘That is your name, miss, is’t not?’

Hester, now dubbed ‘Miss,’ bowed her head.

‘It is when you are angry with me,’ she said.

‘And otherwise?’

Hester still spoke with bowed head.

‘Otherwise my name is “Little Fool,” “Child,” “Love,” and “Dearest.”’

There are persons who can withstand this sort of thing—there were even in the year of grace 1776 persons who could do this—but Mr. Steggall was not of them. It overcame him entirely and he said limply—

‘What, child, do you now desire?’

Hester, with head still bowed, informed him that she desired to go to London in the mulberry-coloured coach.

CHAPTER V.

THE WEATHER OUTLOOK.

THE advantage attaching to Hester's making with bowed head her request concerning the mulberry-coloured coach lay in the circumstance that, as she knew, her father would not at once find words in which to answer it, but would express himself facially on the spot. She was not bound to take notice of a facial veto which she could not be supposed to see. Accordingly she retained her abject posture, until she suddenly found herself carried along the room.

It had two windows. One of them faced on the street, and the other upon the garden. Her father set the girl down before the garden window, and said—

'Here is, Hester, a very engaging view if you are an admirer of prospects.'

Hester perforce looked out.

Snow covered everything, and fell in a steady downpour, looking black in the high air, but whitening as it sank, by snow's beautiful reversal of the phenomenon that the far-off is lovelier than the near.

The girl felt vaguely the beauty and the wonderfulness of what her eyes rested upon, and, wording her feeling as a Georgian girl, said good-humouredly—

'I am not, papa, an admirer of prospects, but 'tis an elegant landscape.'

She then deliberately crossed the room to the other window, and drew attention to the fact that here the snow was not so massed but that the carriage procession moved 'in a smooth, even way.'

'Twill be to-morrow one still more smooth and even, Hester,' her father said drily; 'for what with the snow being every hour deeper 'twill be to-morrow so deep that passengers, both horse and foot, will pass over hedges, gates, and walls as they did when the great snow fell at Youlgrave in Derbyshire.'

Hester decided that it was time to play her trump card.

'Mr. Boddam's ladies are set out,' she said, with assumed nonchalance.

'You jest, child!'

'I do not, papa—on my heart!'

This was Hester's exquisite way of saying 'On my honour,' and she crossed her hands on her heart as she spoke.

'Is Mr. Boddam with them?' was asked.

'No, sir; but a gentleman who looks, mama says, a man of consequence.'

Miles Steggall was silent for a full minute. He was the last of a long generation of Steggalls that had been rivals to a long generation of Boddams, and it was a point of honour with him to let no Boddam distance him. Ergo, if Mr. Boddam could let his ladies set out for London, so must e'en he, Miles Steggall. Having come to this decision, he said surlily—

'If ladies had less gadfly in their caps life would be safer. When you and Mr. Boddam's ladies have both met with a *ne plus ultra* at Marlborough, you will have matter all the remainder of your lives for boasting how you attended the Queen's birthday. You, Hester, were at London in the spring. For what must you needs be going there again?'

'All Bath are going there now, sir,' was the answer, 'and young ladies affect neighbourhoods.'

By 'neighbourhoods' Hester meant populated regions. Her father knew that and knew also the fact regarding young ladies of which she deemed it needful to inform him.

'Young ladies affect rendezvousing,' he said grimly.

The young lady to whom he addressed himself wore an outraged look more eloquent than words.

'Who of the young ladies that are your bosom-friends, miss, are set out?' was the next question.

Hester named young ladies to a number which did credit to the largeness of her heart. Only a few of them were enumerated in Julia, Arabella, Cicely, Chloe, Anna, Dolly, Belinda, Bessy, Henrietta, and Amelia.

'Candle-flies!' Miles Steggall snorted, in allusion to the resemblance of such pleasure-seekers to flies that immolate themselves in flame.

'And who,' he added 'of the young gentlemen that are your beaux are set out?'

'All, sir,' was answered with fine truthfulness.

'Coxcombs!'

'There is indeed, sir, only one of them who is not that,' Hester said quietly.

'Is there so?'

Miles Steggall was not pleased at this exception-making.

'Pray, miss, how shall I know him?' he added sarcastically.

'He wears his natural hair, sir, and he carries a clouded cane.'

In thus describing the one young man who was not a coxcomb, Hester named, doubtlessly of set purpose, the points which he shared in common with nineteen out of every score of young men of the time.

'You are, miss, again a pert!' her father exclaimed. Then, for some inscrutable reason not ill-pleased that his darling had got the better of him, he said, as he fondled her cheek, to describe his caress as it was described at that period—

'Well, *little fool, love, child, and dearest*' (it was his pleasure to call her in one moment by all the names that she had instanced as with him terms of endearment), 'you have compassed your end, and now you may order the mulberry-coloured coach and take me to Battersea to be cut for the simples.'

Hester, with a sudden movement of her head, brought her lips to the hand that was fondling her, and kissed it. Then she said, with glistening eyes—

'You are the dearest of all papas!'

CHAPTER VI.

'HOME IN MOTION.'

HE who has assumed from the tender turn which the interview between Hester and her father took at its close, that when they were in the sequel shut up in the mulberry-coloured coach on their way from Bath to London there was a continuation of like amenities, has totally erred.

'Home in motion,' as travelling of the Georgian kind has been described, has its drawbacks, and one of them is to be found in the fact that the friction which in home not in motion often results from prolonged close propinquity here invariably results from it, and, moreover, is intensified by the circumstance that the propinquity in this case is necessarily of the closest.

The mulberry-coloured coach had not been half an hour on its way before Hester, cold and cramped, expressed herself to

the effect that ground, she imagined, had never been covered at a slower pace. This remark her father met by saying—

‘Tis covered, Hester, at as quick a pace as horses may cover it. Doubtless if these were spiders, and had eight legs each, they might go faster than they do, but their having only four legs makes their gait what ‘tis.’

Hester added a shawl to her already multiplied wraps, throwing into the action as much impetus as was possible where space, while large for a chariot’s interior, did not allow of the whirling actions in which temper can vent itself in a moderately well-sized room.

Mistress Steggall, with a laudable but mistaken idea of establishing peace, said to her daughter—

‘Throw your eye, my love, out of the window—a spectacle more romantic and grotesque you never saw. ‘Tis the very picture of Lapland.’

‘La, mama, your saying that only makes papa get on a perch,’ Hester replied indignantly, while her father illustrated the truth in her discourteous speech by drawing himself up with an expression to which he forthwith gave words, saying—

‘I’ faith, ladies, it almost makes me amends for being frost-bit to have the pleasure of seeing you so punished for your pride.’

As Miles Steggall said this the deity in his bosom did not whisper to him that, while the pride of his womenkind had made them desire this journey, it was his own pride which had made it possible for them to undertake it. In the silence which followed upon his speech he had ample leisure to devote himself to meteorological observations. This led to his next remark, which he addressed to his wife—

‘The air is become very sharp. It would be curious now to attend to the motions of a thermometer.’

Mistress Steggall, who, model wife as she was, did all that in her lay to make home in motion all that home at rest could be, replied quietly—

‘I instructed your man, Jabez, to hang out your glasses, Mr. Steggall.’

‘Did you so, Lydia?’ Mr. Steggall exclaimed, the rhetorical question taking the place of thanks. As he spoke he started to his feet, and next moment he was in the snow outside the coach.

Vituperation followed.

It transpired that while the quicksilver of the one glass was down to half a degree below zero, that of the other, which was graduated only to four degrees below zero, had sunk into the brass guard of the ball.

'What, sir, follows thence?' Hester asked, with brows unwisely raised.

'This, miss, follows thence,' her father answered, 'that when the weather becomes more interesting, Martin's glass will be useless.'

'*More interesting!*' The terrible meaning attaching to this phrase flashed upon Hester, and when somewhat later, as they drove through air perfectly calm, she heard that the glass which was still found useful had gone down to one degree below zero, she received the news without surprise, and, numbed as she was in body and mind, succumbed to a species of stupor from which she was roused by her father's saying—

'It would be now of great interest to know what degree of cold there may be in more exalted situations than where we are.'

'We might, sir, mount on the coach-box,' Hester snapped.

Before Mr. Steggall found words in which to rebuke her, Mistress Steggall said—

'Believing, sir, it would be of interest to you to know that, I wrote to your friend Mr. Filkes before we set out, and asked him to hang out his thermometer made by Adams, and to pay attention to it morning and evening.'

'Did you so, Lydia?' came again the question standing for thanks. Then Mr. Steggall asked—

'How came you to think of Mr. Filkes?'

'I have heard you, Mr. Steggall, say that he lives at two hundred feet above our house, and that wonderful phenomena are to be expected in so elevated a region, and you have before compared your instruments.'

'We have so, Lydia,' Mr. Steggall said.

While conversation of this unexciting order (*nota bene*: it was not deemed so unexciting in 1776 as it would be now) was taking place within the coach, without it all was silence. The horses' hoofs were not heard in the snow, and the coach, as white as the landscape through which it moved, and with every angle of it rounded off, amply justified Mr. Steggall's remark—

'We are now a snowball rolling and gather as we go.'

Mistress Steggall drew her wraps about her, then she voiced

a pity which suddenly filled her for the brute creation at the mercy of this weather, and not provided, as were her husband's horses, with store of fodder. Miles Steggall, drawing on his treasures of memory, said reassuringly—

‘A gentleman who is a naturalist has assured me, Lydia, that animals may be frozen hard, so as to snap in pieces, and yet recover their vitality on being thawed.’

Miles Steggall might have had this remarkable piece of information direct from Gilbert White of Selborne, who makes a statement precisely thus worded. Hester laughed, with a sudden return of good-humour, and said—

‘I hope, papa, when I am frozen hard, so as to snap in pieces, I shall not recover my vitality.’

‘While you can be so sprightly, miss,’ Mr. Steggall replied, smiling, ‘your vitality is sufficient. Do now as your mama before bade you, Hester, and throw your eye out of the window. I have often seen snow, but never saw this meteor fall in such abundancy, or England made so like Siberia.’

Hester looked out of window, and so strong was her young vision that, despite the snow that obscured everything, she saw a man who was signalling to the driver to stop, using gestures the menace in which was unmistakable. With a cry she sank back, and at the same moment the carriage was brought to a stop.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ROBBER.

ON the principle that there is safety in numbers, and believing that his chariot would be one in a long procession, Miles Steggall had set out for Marlborough—which town he rightly decided would be the furthest point reached on this journey—with one servant only. His chariot, he was now rightly led to surmise, had fallen in arrear of the others.

‘My dear’—he turned to his wife—‘this is a fellow who thinks he shall have my purse, but he shall have my pistol.’

Mistress Steggall, crowning all her former acts, produced a purse, and, as she did so, said—

‘In this, Mr. Steggall, I have put counterfeit money which you can give the robber when he shall open the door. Your firing would fright our daughter to death.’

Mr. Steggall took the purse, and, enchanted at the prospect of cheating a robber, was about to congratulate his wife on her extraordinary forethought when the door of the coach was opened.

'Make, sir, no noise,' Mr. Steggall now said, using language more usual in the robber than the robbed. 'My daughter,' he added, 'is like to die of fear. Take this, sir, and begone.'

The person to whom the purse was extended took it mechanically, then, roused to a sudden sense of what he had done, furiously tossed it from him, and, while it fell with a crash in the snow, said in a voice which made Hester incontinently revive,—

'I stopped your horses, sir, because your driver is so drunk there will likely be an accident.'

Miles Steggall stepped from the coach, and found Jabez in a condition in which he had never before beheld him. The extraordinary severity of the cold had led Mr. Steggall's coachman to regale himself with a freedom unusual to him from a flask which he carried, and he had fallen into a profound slumber. The two gentlemen with difficulty lifted him from the box and carried him to a wayside hut, at which Mr. Morgan had left his horse tied up. A beldam here in residence signified her willingness to give the disabled charioteer a temporary lodging.

'We will leave him with Goody Hatton,' Ivor Morgan said, 'and when he wakes he may, as shall please him best, ride home to Bath or hence to Marlborough.'

'Which, sir, of these are we nearer to?' Miles Steggall asked.

'We are, sir, nearer to Marlborough,' was the answer, made as the couple strode back through the snow, which fell as if another sentence of destruction by a deluge had been passed against man.

'Then, sir,' Miles Steggall said, 'if you will sit where I before sat with my ladies, I will coach to Marlborough.'

'But that indeed I will not, sir,' the younger gentleman replied, smiling, and as he spoke he sprang aloft to Jabez's late seat.

'You, sir,' he added, 'pray now be seated with your ladies, for I will be your coachman.'

Miles Steggall said nothing, but what was said in a glance which was full of an old man's admiration for intrepidity in his

junior. He then entered the coach, and was about to shut himself within it when a voice from the coach-box said—

‘Sir, your purse ! It lies still in the snow. I shall descend and give it you.’

‘Do not so, sir !’ Miles Steggall replied peremptorily. ‘It matters not in the least about it. If you will coach us, make no more delay.’

The young man shook the reins, and the coach moved on.

CHAPTER VIII.

COACHING UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

IN the initial stages of coaching Mr. Steggall and his ladies Marlboroughwards, Ivor Morgan, who was as poor a gentleman as any on the hither side of Ireland, gave somewhat doleful thought to that fat purse left lying in the snow.

Such indifference to money on the part of Mr. Steggall argued an abundance of it which was very unpleasing to the young Welshman, deeply enamoured of Miles Steggall’s daughter, but with a heart of pride in him that made him loathe that wisdom of old Tusser—

‘Though love be, in choosing, far better than gold,
Let love come with somewhat, the better to hold.’

‘Somewhat’ so hugely disproportionate as was to his slender income the wealth of Hester Steggall supplied matter for thought which brought a look of acute distress to the face of Ivor Morgan. But his thought was not one which held him all the time. Driving, as he was, through a shower of falling stars, for the snowflakes gradually took this aspect to his strongly excited imagination, his fancy played with the scene before him, and the world, robed with snow and veiled with frost, seemed to this lover turned charioteer to smile on him like a bride.

What was actually happening was this. With feet and hands deadened by the piercing cold, and the snow about him like a mantle, Ivor Morgan was falling into a trance. Suddenly himself realising this, he had recourse to a singular measure to waken himself. Taking a short grip of the whip, a hold of

which he had with difficulty retained, he switched the cord of it across his face, causing himself a sharp pain that not only stung him into full wakefulness, but that drew from him an ejaculation not of the mildest. This harsh stimulus he applied to himself at intervals for the rest of the journey, with the result that when he arrived at Marlborough he presented an appearance very unbeautiful. This was the less a matter of no importance that Marlborough of that date was not what Marlborough of this date is.

CHAPTER IX.

THE 'NE PLUS ULTRA.'

PERHAPS there is not at present a town in England which more than Marlborough presents what must have been the appearance of that inn described by Dickens as expressing everywhere past coachfulness and present coachlessness. The opening of the Great Western Railway was the closing of the Great Western Coachway upon which this Wiltshire town was a leading stage. It then, as now, consisted principally of one long street which was in those—its palmy—days, not paved and sparsely lighted. There has in these respects been some amelioration, but Marlborough, for all that, has fallen, fallen, fallen.

Over forty public coaches halted daily at its doors in Georgian days, and, in the weather's despite, on this day of January, 1776, over forty public coaches, and over three times forty private ones, had halted at its doors.

They were not destined to get further, though ladies fretted and offered large rewards to louts and loons if they would shovel them a track to London.

You are to note those words 'shovel a track to London,' for they are precisely the words which the fretting ladies used.

The louts and loons who stood agape along the coaches drawn up at Marlborough made no movement to do as the ladies desired, their inertia, in part, being the result of habit, and, in so far as it was not the result of this, having for its cause a knowledge, possessed by at least one in every ten of them, that London was seventy-five miles distant.

To shovel a track which should bear fretting ladies over seventy-five miles of roadway, covered with mountain-high snow, was a task which not the most enterprising shovellers of Marlborough saw their way to accomplish.

Consequently the ladies were fain to make the best where they did not prefer to make the worst of matters amid such accommodation as they found in the pretty wooden houses which were as handsomely ornamented within as they were ornamented without, and the curious carved work in which was a part of the pride of Marlborough in her palmy days.

Here at a crackling fire sat Mistress and Miss Boddam, while near them, standing at the fire, was the gentleman of the whilom sour, heavy look which had established in the mind of Hester his claim to be considered a man of consequence. His look was now so altered that Mistress Boddam, indulging in the frankly personal note which characterised conversation of a hundred years ago, said, as she looked at him with a pleased surprise—

‘Sir, you smile most agreeably. Why do you so?’

‘I smile, ma’am, because of the fire,’ was the answer, with a bow.

‘When, sir, you are turned into a flower’—this poetical speech came from Miss Boddam—‘you must be turned into an apricot, which is set against the chimney.’

The smiling gentleman bowed again, this time less deeply, but more significantly. Miss Boddam blushed, and thus was begun in very pretty fashion what ended in Miss Boddam’s becoming Mistress Ballenden.

It was a good match, nothing less and—nothing more.

The match made by Hester on the same day was something more, for the other party to it was not gentleman who wore a sour, heavy look excepting when set against the chimney.

‘What, sir, has happened to your face?’ Miles Steggall said in a tone of horror, as the light of the room in which he and his wife and daughter and charioteer at last found shelter fell on the scarred face of the half-frozen Welshman.

Ivor Morgan, averting his head so as to hide from Hester what, as Miles Steggall gave him to understand, was the affrighting nature of his appearance, said apologetically that he had found it necessary to whip himself as well as the horses, and would not longer offend the ladies’ eyes by remaining with them.

'I am struck dumb, sir,' Miles Steggall said huskily, then, turning to his wife, he tucked her arm under his, and said—

'Lydia, I will ask you to come away with me.'

'In a moment, Mr. Steggall,' Mistress Steggall replied, and disengaging herself went up to the Welshman and said simply—

'You have the love, sir, of Hester, and the blessing of her papa and mama.'

It only remained for Hester, now left alone with her lover, to make good her mother's words. Ivor Morgan, still averting his head, told her so. It was his way of proposing marriage, and Hester understood this, and replied indignantly—

'I shall never, Mr. Morgan, accept a gentleman who asks me to be his wife with his head behind his back !'

Ivor Morgan turned slowly round.

'I cannot bear, Miss Steggall,' he said, 'that a beautiful young lady shall see me thus.'

This was a bait to which a young lady of the rich heart of Hester could not fail to rise.

'You were never to me, Mr. Morgan,' she said, 'so beautiful a young gentleman.'

They did not shake hands upon that, but they kissed—and kissed again—upon that.

* * * * *

It was thus that there was made good Mr. Steggall's prophecy that his ladies and Mr. Boddam's ladies would meet with a *ne plus ultra* at Marlborough on their way to attending the Queen's Birthday.

ELSA D'ESTERRE-KEELING.

THE LAST NIGHT OF GAIUS GRACCHUS.

BEATEN. I am beaten in my life's one work ;
And, beaten, know the bitterness of Death.
Death—to have died before we knew the pain :
Death, marching through the pain to victory ;
Death, with the laurel bound about our brows,
Making libation of the heart's best blood—
Oh, such death were not bitter ; so to die
Were worth the having lived.

But, Gods above !

To see the life-work crashing to the ground,
The vengeance snatched even from my grasp . . .
my grasp ! . . .

The foe triumphant, mocking at my fall,
The murderers throned in scarlet robes *his* blood
Has dyed—

Oh, Roman People whom he loved,
Unworthy ! You for whom he lived—and died—
Is this the end of all who love you so ?
You who stood by and saw Tiberius fall,
Who knew those hell-hounds from the Senate there
That snarled and snapped and bayed about his heels ;
Who saw them loosed upon him, drag him down,
Rend him, and glut them on the purple stream,
The life-blood welling from Rome's noblest heart—
Oh, hearts of stone ! . . .

And yet, I curse you not.

He loved you so, our wisest, purest, best,
Lived for you, died for you. I curse you not,
For his sake ; whom you sacrificed—as now

I am your sacrifice, who would have hurled
The slayers headlong into the black abyss
Whither they go, their own way—not by mine ;
Their own way.

Gods ! might I but see the end,
Watch them, crushed, helpless, struggling, ever sink
Down : with no hand to aid in utmost need.
Down.

Well. All's over. I have played and lost.
To-morrow—why, the sun will rise, and shine,
And sink again in glory to the west,
And birds will sing, flowers blow, and children play,
And I . . .

We twain will know, Tiberius.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CELTIC ART.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'SOME CELTIC LOVE-SONGS.'

'In the elder day of art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part,
For the gods see everywhere.'

IN like manner as clouds creep up green Irish hillsides, disclosing sometimes a patch of golden sunshine, sometimes the emerald green of young corn, or the amethyst glow of bell-heather, so, before the sunlight of loving research, the mists rise from Ireland's past. And as they rise, there comes the flash of a golden torc, perhaps, or the gleam of some jewelled *cundach*, shrine of precious relics, or, it maybe, the glitter of some pastoral staff, once swayed by powerful prelates, or the glories of some wonder-waking manuscript. Face to face with one of these treasures, it is evident that, even so far back as the sixth and seventh centuries, Celtic art had not only reached a marvellous perfection, but that its influence was wide-reaching. It seems a far cry to the Swiss monastery of St. Gall and Reichenau, to the libraries of Basle, Leyden, and Vienna, but even so far have the distinctive Celtic manuscripts, with their illuminations of unrivalled beauty, been conveyed. There are certain evidences of an interchange of goldsmith's work at the time of St. Patrick's coming from Gaul to Ireland; but it was the succeeding Christian centuries which produced the shrines and caskets, the crosses and croziers—some, happily, still preserved—which serve as types of an unexcelled skill in design and execution, and a complete mastery over the arts of tempering, stamping, and engraving. There is no doubt that the art of metal-working had been brought to a high state of perfection before the coming of Christianity. There is, for example, an urn-shaped cauldron of bronze (now in the Irish Science and Art Museum) composed

of plates of metal so riveted as to be, still, not only a marvel, but a mystery. This, with other bronze vessels, and those wonderfully beautiful and curious torcs and fibulæ preserved in the same collection, challenge comparison with similar work of any period, and no doubt laid the foundation of Irish craftsmen's success in later generations. But when pressed into the service of the Church, Celtic Art seemed to have reached its highest development. It grew to its perfection in the ninth and tenth centuries, and it is of the greatest interest to trace the grafting of Christian decorative art on to the pagan art of pre-Christian Eire.

Of the characteristics of Celtic art one stands out pre-eminently. It is the loving perfection of detail. Together with much else of which Erin may well be proud, this strong spirit of religious enthusiasm, or of artistic devotion, which, 'wrought with greatest care each minute and unseen part,' gleams out, jewel-like, from the shadowy past. We have read of the devotion of the great Greek sculptor who, when adorning the Parthenon, finished the back of his Theseus—a figure destined to be seen, standing against the wall of the tympanum, at a height of forty-four feet—to a pitch of perfection which has made it a study for all time. The same principle actuated the Celtic artists. To those unacquainted with Irish gold-work, or with the Irish masterpieces of illumination, this veritable worship in work comes as a revelation.

Take, for examples of this exquisiteness of finish and detail, two contemporaneous specimens of Celtic gold-work—the Tara Brooch and the Ardagh Chalice. Comparison with designs in the 'Book of Kells' seem to mark the end of the seventh century as the date of their making. The following description is quoted from Miss Margaret Stokes's 'Early Christian Art in Ireland': 'The brooch is composed of a metal harder than silver, formed by a combination of copper and tin called "white bronze." The face of the ornament is overlaid with various ornamented patterns, of the same class as those found in Irish illuminated MSS., designed with beautiful taste, and which are not confined to the front, but enrich the back also. A lens of no moderate power is necessary if we would appreciate the perfect execution of these ornaments. There are no less than seventy-six varieties of these designs, all of which exhibit an admirable sense of ornamental beauty and happy fitness for their relative situa-

tions ; in the fastenings used to keep these delicate traceries in their places only a delicate bar, scarcely perceptible to the naked eye, is found.' The history of the Tara Brooch is unknown. It was picked up by a poor little child near the sea-shore on August 24, 1850, and was sold by the child's mother to a watchmaker in Drogheda. It is now beside the Ardagh Chalice in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy (Science and Art Museum, Kildare Street, Dublin).

Not pages alone, but a small volume of description might be written concerning the Ardagh Chalice. It is a two-handled cup composed of gold, silver, bronze, lead, and copper, the enamel work upon which ranks with the most beautiful of any period or country. The infinite perfection of detail is exemplified by the fact that perhaps the most beautiful part of the chalice is the *inside* of the stem and foot. The inscription which runs round the brim of the chalice is another instance of the same perfection. Beneath the band of interlaced gold filigree is a band of fine engraving, or stippling, which makes a background for the square letters forming the names of the twelve apostles—St. Paul taking the place of Judas. This cup was found by a boy who was digging potatoes in the old Rath of Ardagh, Co. Limerick. The filigree and enamel adornments, and the jewel settings, comprise over 350 pieces, and the lovely cup is perhaps the most beautiful example of goldsmith's work, of any period, in Western Europe. With the exception of a chalice in the Abbey of Witten in the Tyrol, the Ardagh Chalice is a unique specimen of the two-handled Chalices used in the earliest Christian times, and this serves to mark its antiquity, and so causes increased wonder at its absolute, nay almost reverential, perfectness.

As another example of this characteristic of this matchless detail the famous Cross of Cong, the latest example of purely Irish gold-work, may be cited. Lurking in crevices of the moulding on its sides, so minute as almost to need a magnifying-glass, are tiny heads of wolves, or wolf-dogs, with jewelled eyes. This splendid processional cross was, in fact, a shrine made to contain a piece of the True Cross, and it is of oak overlaid with plates of copper. These plates, in their turn, are overlaid with gold filigree, set with precious stones, and bosses of enamel, and this filigree exhibits an endless variety of design. So diverse and elaborate, indeed, are the interlacings that the problem is not with what eyes and with what implements were

they executed, but what mind conceived them ! Yet we know the artist's name, for along the sides of the cross, in Irish character, runs this inscription :—

‘ In this Cross is preserved the Cross on which the Founder of the World suffered. Pray for Terdelbach O'Chonchobair (Turlough O'Connor) the King of Erin, for whom this shrine was made. Pray for Domnall MacFlannacan Bishop. . . . Pray for Maeljesu MacBratdan O'Echan, who made this shrine.’

In the ‘ Annals of Innisfallen ’ it is recorded that ‘ a portion of the True Cross came into Ireland and was enshrined in Roscommon by Turlough O'Connor.’ Later, at the end of a stormy, sin-stained, unfruitful life, weary with wars and rumours of wars, this Turlough, last of the kings, entered the Abbey of Cong by Corrib's shore, the abbey which Roderick, his father, had founded, and he himself had endowed. To Cong, then, the great processional cross was brought by him—from Tuam—and at Cong the trumpet blasts of the conquering Normans echoing even to his far western retreat, the weak, senile king passed away, full of years, and sins, and heaviness for the conquest of his country, but yet—let us hope—having found—

‘ The peace of God, that passeth understanding,
Reigning in these cloisters and these corridors.’

So the gleam of the great Cross of Cong is, as it were, the last flash of Celtic art in its old grandeur. Concealed in Reformation times, the cross was found by the parish priest, the Rev. Mr. Prendergast, early in this century, in an old chest in the village of Cong. It was purchased from his successor in 1839 for the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy, where it is now an honoured treasure.

Once again, the same perfectness of detail characterises the Irish *cumdach*s, or book-shrines, which are themselves a characteristic of Celtic art, since they may be almost said to be peculiar to Ireland. The custom of enshrining sacred books seems to have prevailed in very early Christian days, and although it died out early upon the Continent, yet the custom lingered on in this far Isle of the West. In the Isle of Saints they cared not for rich bindings and jewelled clasps. To quote Miss M. Stokes on the subject: ‘ A different sentiment seemed to work in Ireland, where the book was held as a sacred heirloom by the successors of the Patron Saint, whose memory they had cherished for perhaps five hundred years.’

So his old book was left untouched, as something whose value could not be increased by gold or precious stones; but a box was made on which was lavished all the artist's skill, and in this the sacred relic was preserved.' The oldest of these shrines which we now possess (three older ones, known to have existed, are lost) is the exquisite 'Soiceal Molaise,' the *Cumdach* of St. Molaise. St. Molaise was a contemporary of St. Columba, and laboured chiefly about Devenish Island on the bosom of Lough Erne. An inscription which runs round the bottom of the shrine, dates the making of the *cumdach* between 1001 and 1025, and says: 'Pray for Cenn (failad), the successor of Molaise, for whom (this case) was made, and for Gillabaithin the artizan who made (it).' The square case, fashioned e'er the Normans set foot in England, is of bronze, upon which silver plates, overlaid with gold filigree, have been riveted. The design is in the form of a cross, with its Celtic circle, in the centre of which, as well as in the surrounding panels, jewels stand out like bosses. At the four corners, the symbolical figures of the Evangelists—the Eagle, the Lion, the Ox, and the Man—are curiously interlaced. During the centuries some of the filigree plates have become unriveted and lost, but those remaining show the same intricate diversity and perfectness which distinguishes Irish gold-work.

In the Museum of the Irish Academy is preserved also the 'Domnach Airgid' ('The Silver Shrine'), a casket of yew-wood, entirely covered with silver plates of filigree, in which a copy of the Gospels was formerly enclosed. The MS. (also preserved in the Museum) is the oldest extant in Ireland, and is now almost undecipherable. In all probability it belonged to St. Patrick. There also may be seen the 'Breac Maodhog,' with its quaintly customed figures, embossed in bronze, and the silver shrine of St. Columba, which enshrined his Latin version of the Psalms, as well as the 'Cathach' of the O'Donnells, which contains a copy of the Psalter, and was carried into battle as a breastplate by a hereditary lay-priest before the army of Cenél Conaill in former years, and regarded with superstitious reverence.

Now that the world goes too fast for the execution of such lifelong and loving labours, it is with a reverence resembling awe that the children of the nineteenth century turn to those wonderful manuscripts which these *cumdachs* were made to contain. These manuscripts also exemplify, even more strikingly the worship of work—the beautiful perfection of

every part, but they have another characteristic ; the weird, and at times grotesque, interlacing designs which adorn them, and which are peculiar to, and distinctive of, Celtic illumination. True, this Celtic interlacing is to be found in MSS. in other parts of Europe, but when the origin of these is traced it is almost invariably found to be Celtic. There are MSS. in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, at Turin, at Naples, at Schaffhausen, Basle and Berne, but those in Italy were probably brought from Bobio, a monastery of Piedmont, founded in 613 by Columbanus, and the others from St. Gall and Reichenau. Irish ecclesiastics were ever missionaries, carrying their books and their arts with them throughout Europe. Whether this peculiarly individual style of illumination owed its first origin to the ancient East, or not, has been a question for experts, for whom the crafts, customs, and architecture of Ireland—'that little western isle, where their appearances were later, their periods of existence shorter, and their transitions more rapid than in the East, since the older the human race becomes the more rapidly does progress advance, and changes follow in quick succession'—must always have an interest. But those who are acquainted with, or who, it may be, possess the Celtic imagination, so keenly susceptible to colour and form, and in such quick sympathy with a wildly and grandly beautiful nature, have little hesitation in believing that this Celtic imagination alone originated the style with which its name is associated.

In the Library of Trinity College are preserved the 'Book of Durrow,' a seventh century Latin manuscript of the Gospels, and the 'Book of Armagh,' which is illuminated with a delicate precision and minuteness truly marvellous. Professor Westwood, having examined half an inch square through a magnifying-glass, counted 'no fewer than *one hundred and fifty-eight* interlacements of a slender ribbon pattern formed of white lines, edged with black cones upon a black ground.' The contents of the 'Book of Armagh' are of supreme interest ; they comprise the Acts of St. Patrick and his 'Confessions.'

Celebrated above all these old MSS. is the famous 'Book of Kells,' an uncial script of the four Gospels (Vulgate text) which is the glory and admiration of all who examine its richly adorned pages. 'To draw a perfect circle, unaided by compasses, is a feat only to be accomplished by an eye and hand in perfect training and obedience to the artist's will.

Such circles are to be seen in every page of the "Book of Kells." To quote Ferdinand Keller: "In the initial letters the genius of Irish ornamental design is found in full development and brought to a degree of beauty and precision of execution of which it is almost impossible to form an idea without having seen it. Here are displayed in the greatest profusion and variety the spirals, the complicated serpentine windings, and the panelling: in short, the designer has expended his whole skill and knowledge in producing these gigantic initials, whose height is often from ten to fifteen inches. The most difficult task in these patterns is, without doubt, the spiral lines. These are real masterpieces, which furnish a splendid proof of the extraordinary firmness of hand possessed by the artist.' This triumph of ecclesiastical art was in use for at least four centuries e'er Strongbow's knight, Fitzstephen, the first Norman invader to set foot in Eire, landed near that 'waste of ever-shifting sand' which has shifted and drifted over and buried—like another Herculaneum—the old town of Bannow, near Waterford. In 815 one Cellach, having built in Kells a new church and monastery dedicated to St. Columba, brought thither the great illuminated book—which then had been written for more than a hundred years—and there it remained until the suppression of the monastery about 1540. The exact date when the book was made cannot be asserted. The old tradition that it was the work of St. Columba himself cannot now be maintained, but its date may be placed between 650 and 690 A.D. It came into the hands of Archbishop Gerald Plunket about 1568, and it subsequently belonged to Bishop Ussher, who bequeathed it, with the rest of his library, to Trinity College, Dublin.

It may be well to pause in these days, when 'of the making of many books there is no end,' to contemplate for a moment this great 'Book,' written by unwearying fingers 'with much toil and pain'—

'That goodly folio standing yonder,
Without one single blot, or blunder.
Take it, O Lord, and let it be
As something that is done for Thee !'

Such was the spirit of those elder days of art. The illuminator—thinking little of the world outside his scriptorium walls—did nought in haste, and the world will not forget his work hastily. Nor must such work be hastily

examined. Every page of this marvel of illumination glows with gorgeous and unfaded colours, the vividness of which copyists of to-day are unable to reproduce. No gold enhances it, but the title pages and initial letters lose nothing on this account, since they are masterpieces of harmonious combinations of colour, of firm accuracy of line. The more closely each page is scrutinised the more will its artistic perfections grow upon those who study it, and upon those who are 'in touch' with the spirit of the days when 'each minutest part' was perfected, since 'the gods see everywhere.' Ablaze with colour, rich in fancy without error or erasure, this copy of the Word may well have been written, if not under the guidance of an angel—as the legends tell—at least by one to whom the angelic spirit of perpetual worship was not alien, and from whom the City, whose foundations are set with 'fair colours,' was never very far off.

Such are the relics of 'the olden, golden' days—relics, until recently, unappreciated and half-forgotten—relics of a past when craft and learning, and holiness and missionary zeal were the heritage of that dear Woman-Land, which, since then, has 'suffered many things of many physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse.'

But the mists are rising on the hillsides——

L. M. McCRAITH.

THE STRONG GOD CIRCUMSTANCE.

BY HELEN SHIPTON, AUTHOR OF 'THE HERONS,' 'DAGMAR,' ETC.

BOOK I.

'OF THE THREE KALENDARS.'

CHAPTER VIII. (*continued*).

'YOU are an early traveller,' went on Arthur, and as the other muttered something about 'a night journey,' he added, 'Have you had breakfast yet? If not, my rooms are not far from here, and though I don't know *what* I can offer, I can venture to offer you something.'

'Thanks awfully,' said young Waterlow hastily. 'I got some breakfast in the town while the trap was getting ready. Much obliged all the same.'

He was manifestly relieved to have an excuse ready, and Arthur nodded to him, and moved away, with a look that invited Valentine Elliot to come with him.

People rarely, except on the stage, relieve their feelings by a melodramatic scowl at the back of a departing foe. But some dull, heavy faces can be very expressive at times, with or without the consent of their owners, and Tom Waterlow's look, as his eyes followed Arthur, was as frankly eloquent as that of an angry child, though less innocent. And Valentine, glancing back, caught the look, and remembered it in time to come.

Silently he and his companion walked up to Cross Rigg. The sight of Tom Waterlow had brought Arthur down from the regions in which he had spent the night, with a descent so sudden and sharp that it had left him dizzy and sick. How petty and squalid the whole affair seemed in this cold, pure light of morning! and yet it was *life*, the most important thing, to him, in all the world so far.

The instinct of hospitality made him rouse himself when they reached his rooms, and as they entered Valentine Elliot looked round with a queer smile.

'I don't quite know whether I ought to be here,' he said. 'My grandfather and I did not part the best of friends, and I've never crossed his doorstone since.'

'I think just now we may reckon this as my room, not his,' answered Arthur, and then, as one who had reconciled many a foolish youth with 'the governor' or 'the authorities,' he added, 'Do you mind telling me what you and he fell out about?'

'Not a bit. He likes his own way, and I like mine, that's all. He's a religious old chap, and he wanted me to go to chapel with him; but religion doesn't hinder him from being as hard as the nether millstone, and I told him that I didn't see that I should be any the better of it. That was one thing; and another fault he has to find with me is that I'm a Radical, and speak against "the powers that be," as he says. But—I don't know—if any one was to repeat to the Vaughans, or any of the gentry round, some of the tales that *he* can tell about them when you set him going on a winter night, I don't think they'd be very well pleased.'

'Many of us like to keep a monopoly of that kind of thing,' answered Arthur. 'I presume it is the grandfathers of the present lords of the soil to whom these tales refer?'

'It's all the same,' answered the other. 'What's bred in the bone——'

Arthur had touched the bell when he first entered the room, and now in response to it Lesley stood in the doorway, fresh and beautiful in her plain morning dress, making her cousin start and flush and forget what he was saying.

Custom had partly reconciled Arthur to being waited upon by her, though he would have preferred that it should have been done by the ordinary farmhouse servantmaid. And Valentine Elliot belonged to a class that expects personal service from its womenkind, and was not surprised to see his cousin 'sweet and serviceable.' But both men watched her with a fascination that was more nearly of the same quality than either would have liked to think.

It was like a sort of ghostly echo of the past, to be thus sitting at breakfast with an irreconcilable young man who needed to be gently persuaded to make the best instead of the

worst of his life and its chances. Arthur had done it so often ; and he did not find such a gulf between Valentine Elliot and his former clients as most men would have expected, and perhaps have created by expecting. There is a vast space between Hodge and the average undergraduate ; but then, Hodge is a rare and possibly even mythical personage, with whom Arthur had as yet no acquaintance.

In many respects Valentine Elliot's views and opinions were decidedly conventional. His discontent, his crude Socialism, his strictly local politics, his ignorance, and his knowledge, were all much what Arthur had expected, and readily to be explained by his circumstances. It was conventional, even, that he should be in love with his beautiful cousin, as Arthur shrewdly suspected him of being. She was so evidently meant for him to fall in love with ; with refinement that he could appreciate, and position just sufficiently above his own, and beauty that none but a blind man could fail to see. Only the question as to whether she cared for him remained to give piquancy to the situation ; and Arthur told himself with some emphasis that no doubt she did—that the young man was as plainly marked out for her as she for him.

On that point Arthur hinted no question ; and on another he instinctively felt that he should learn nothing as yet. What did this Ishmael think of the Isaac of the family ?—did he hate the young man who held the place that another turn of Fate might have made his own ? If that was so, and he was ashamed of it, as might appear from his reticence on the subject, then here was a further complication of a situation that was already complicated enough.

'I think,' said Valentine slowly, after a brief pause in their conversation—'I think you are acquainted with that young chap that drove up just now to the works in a trap from Dennet's ?'

'I was. I knew something of him at college.'

'Waterlow's his name, I understood you to say ?'

'Yes—Tom Waterlow. Have you any notion what he could be doing down here ?'

'It's easy giving a guess. You see, this firm of contractors that have the reservoir in hand go by the name of Baker, Fenton & Co. But Baker's dead long ago, and Fenton was never more than a sleeping partner, so they say, and the business is all in the hands of the Co., and that was two

brothers of the name of Waterlow. One of them's dead now, and *his* son doesn't take to the business, so he's been bought out, and there's only Thomas Waterlow left in it, and he is worth a million of money.'

'So I have heard before,' said Arthur, and his lips tightened even while they smiled. 'But that doesn't explain what his son should be doing down here at eight o'clock on a cold autumn morning.'

'Well, the clerk of the works told somebody that he'd been carrying on disgracefully at college and got sent away, and that his father swore he should come down here, for a bit at any rate, and get put in the way of things, and earn his own bread. And as for getting here at eight o'clock, it's likely enough he started yesterday and took a spree on the road. Unless I'm much mistaken, he'd never been in bed all night, and had had more brandy and water than aught else for his breakfast.'

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE VERGE.

'A little while, a little love,
May yet be ours, who have not said
The word it makes our eyes afraid
To know that each is thinking of.'

D. G. Rosselli.

WINIFRED MARLOWE, though by no means 'fast,' was one of those young women of the present day who do what is right in their own eyes without being afraid of what man, or woman either, may say of them. But it did sometimes occur to her that this matter of the Ashden night-school was one of the questionable features of the rather unusual circumstances in which she and her friend now found themselves.

Undoubtedly those evenings were very amusing; from the moment when Arthur Kenyon met them at the door of his 'tin tabernacle,' assiduously divested them of their wraps, and welcomed them with compliments and 'chaff'; all through the school curriculum, with the odd blunders and admiring attention of their gigantic and slow-witted scholars; till the gathering broke up, and the ladies were escorted out into the

darkness, and a whistle from Arthur would bring Redmond from somewhere among the shadows, and all four would walk down the quiet lanes towards Lassington, discoursing on all imaginable topics.

But what would have been thought of them in that University which once counted Arthur Kenyon as the most dangerous flirt within its walls?

Winifred saw now how he had earned that reputation, and she thought that it did him an injustice. A man to whom all women are interesting must needs be interesting to women, but if he does harm it will probably be quite unintentionally.

To Vanessa his manner was full of the laughing homage of a man who does not care to hide the pleasure that beauty gives him, and who knows that to a beautiful woman one courtier more is no great matter; to Winifred herself it conveyed a clever man's appreciation of the fact that she too was clever and *bonne camarade* also.

'It never would have meant anything,' thought the plain girl, with a wise, rather sad little smile, 'and now it means—less than nothing. If Julius Cæsar had been banished from Rome, instead of murdered, the village folk would have found him most keenly interested in their small affairs—just as this man is. Only—I wonder how long he will be able to bear it?'

Arthur tried to persuade Valentine Elliot to come to the night-school, either as scholar, or teacher, or both in one, but he was not to be prevailed upon.

He was attracted by Arthur, and he was not afraid of the ladies, but perhaps he was shy of the men, or afraid of losing his influence with them by being seen on intimate terms with a member of those 'upper classes' of which he and they disapproved.

When he and Arthur Kenyon had foregathered by the dying navy's bedside, they had seemed to meet in a region where earthly distinctions looked small indeed; but Valentine could not have explained that circumstance to himself, far less to his comrades on the embankment.

But he came to see Arthur at Cross Rigg, moved thereto not only by the chance it gave him of a glimpse of Lesley; and they discussed many things, and Valentine asked more questions than Arthur, with all his learning and his natural stock of self-confidence, could answer. Nevertheless the bitterness

is gone out of some questions when they have once been asked, even if the answer is still far to seek.

It needed some effort on Arthur's part to come and go about the works as usual, and neither to confront Tom Waterlow nor to avoid him. But though the young man looked sulky enough he seemed to have no present intention of making himself objectionable, and there was no denying that he got on better with the work and with the men than might have been expected. Dull as he had proved himself at books, he seemed to have some aptitude, perhaps hereditary, for the kind of work to which they put him, and he dealt with the workmen in a surly, rough-spoken, good-natured fashion which they understood and appeared to like. 'If I had met him first *here*, in his right place,' thought Arthur, 'I should have liked him too. But whether he would ever have liked *me* is another matter.'

'He'll do well enough if he keeps sober,' said the manager bluntly one day, and then Arthur learnt that Waterlow *père*, in his early struggling days, had been, though a man of immense intellect and energy, not at all the sober, self-denying hero of the little biographies of 'Men who have Risen,' but had been addicted to periodical 'sprees,' as his men called them—failings that had always been strictly subordinated to business interests, but that were perhaps repeating themselves, with a difference, in the case of his son.

Altogether life was tolerably full for Arthur, up at Cross Rigg, in the wild, short winter days, and a multitude and variety of occupations gave him something quite as near happiness as he looked or hoped for. Only sometimes the sickening sting of recollection shot through him and made him feel life for the moment unliveable. By some trick of association perhaps, this happened most often when he opened his door in the wall on the way to his bed and stood in the dark little antechamber with its faint odour of dry-rot. Sometimes he turned on his heel and went out again, to walk till he was too weary to be alive to any but physical sensations—sometimes he went on, and faced the dreary hours of wakefulness, listening to the many eerie sounds that haunt an old house on the edge of a northern waste, and wondering how many such hours it would need to wear out the stamp of memory and dull the capacity for pain.

And then at last sleep would come, and a new day, and

Lesley's beautiful face about the house, and various matters of piquant difficulty to be adjusted, mainly by personal influence; and existence proved to have a little savour still.

Meanwhile for Lesley the days were full and fleet, so fleet and full that if she had compared them with those of the winter before, which she did not, she might have felt that only during the last few months had she been really alive.

The old-fashioned, almost prudish refinement of her god-mother, and the isolated life that they had led together, had kept the girl in a state of innocent ignorance very unusual among those socially her equals; and the loneliness of Cross Rigg and her mother's reserve had prevented any sudden enlightenment from coming upon her. Had they been even a shade better off, and had employed a rough servant-maid who would have had a 'lad' and have chattered freely to Lesley about 'courting,' a lover might by this time have seemed to her a desirable possession, and love a gift sweet to bestow—or very much the reverse.

But as it was her ideas were all derived from books, from the stormy and ill-fated courtships of Pamela and Clarissa Harlowe and their imitators; and her cousin's eager interest in her was as far removed from these on the one hand as Mr. Ledbury's unwelcome attentions had been on the other.

So, when once it was established that Arthur Kenyon was no more like Lovelace or Pamela's 'Mr. B——' than he was like that ill-bred clerk with whom Lesley felt it insulting to compare him, the girl went on the even tenour of her way and enjoyed the new interest that had come into it without a thought of what life teaches her elders—that for every new joy one must sooner or later pay down the price.

But the ending of her tranquillity came, as it generally does through a very small matter.

Lesley was dusting Mr. Kenyon's sitting-room one day, touching his books and papers with that scrupulous care which it seemed only natural to bestow upon his property. Arthur had very few personal belongings with him at Cross Rigg except his books—there were hardly any amongst the many presents he had received, and the many miscellaneous trifles he had picked up here and there, that were not too closely linked with memories of old times to be welcome to him now. So the brass candlesticks and spun-glass fountains under glass shades still stood on the high mantelshelf, only supplemented

by a wasp's nest, some fossils picked up on the embankment, and other 'rubbish' recently acquired by Arthur—offerings for the most part from 'Slumpy' and his fellows. But books—books past counting—covered the table, and the old piano,—deprived of half its notes and degraded to the rank of a side-board—and the 'ark' of black oak that filled the recess of the window.

On a little stand by Mr. Kenyon's usual chair lay the book that he had been reading before he went out, and Lesley took it up with reverent touch. Laid in it, as if to mark the place, was a little glove, of soft brown kid, too long to be a child's, too slender, surely, to fit a woman !

With a sense of wrongdoing Lesley lifted and looked at it. There was a faint odour of sandalwood about it—a perfume quite new to her. Yes, it must be a lady's glove ; no child ever wore a thing so dainty, but how small her hands must be, smaller even than those that Lovelace kissed so tempestuously long ago !

Lesley spread the glove out upon her own capable, shapely hand, smiled a smile that had no mirth in it, restored it to its place, and laid the book where she had found it.

That glove of Vanessa Carroll's had been left accidentally at the night-school and rescued by Arthur from a dusty corner behind one of the desks the following day ; and it would be with a laughing profession of unwillingness that he would restore it to its owner next time they met.

There *were* men about the world who cherished a stolen glove or ribbon or flower that had once been Miss Carroll's, and from which they would have been loth to part ; but Arthur Kenyon would only pretend to covet this trove of his, and she would know full well that it was but a pretence. But Lesley did not know that, any more than she knew why the little glove should seem to hold a hand of ice that gripped her heart.

Gentlemen begged or stole gloves from the ladies they admired she knew—one could fancy just the look of Mr. Kenyon's dark-blue audacious eyes as he took *this* pledge, by fraud or favour. And how could it concern the working girl who cleaned the gentleman's room ? It was only her place to avoid the impertinence of touching the sacred thing, which would make him so angry if he knew of it.

So she told herself, and was miserable for half a day, with a heartache uncomprehended and unconfessed.

And then Arthur Kenyon came home and brought Valentine Elliot with him ; and somehow the sight of the two together brought to her a curious kind of partial revelation that was a keener pain and yet a cure.

She would have been blinder than ever woman was if she had not seen how her cousin's dark eyes followed her as she came and went, and she knew that just so her own eyes followed the other man, only her woman's wit could keep her secret better.

'This is what they call love,' she said to herself. 'It is not what I thought it would be like. Valentine loves me, I suppose, and I—I have a right to love where I choose, as long as I tell nobody—as long as no one can guess. It is no misfortune to any woman to love the best she knows. And if *he* had not come here I might never have known any one better than poor Valentine.'

The thought might have seemed like a passionate protest against the cruelty of the chance or fate that was marring her young life, but that was not at all what was in Lesley's thoughts. In those heart-depths where we reason in something more subtle than any spoken language, she was felicitating herself upon the happy lot that had befallen her. She might have been the wife of a man like other men, and instead, it had been given her to love Arthur Kenyon. To have dreamed of regretting that he would never love her in return would have been a piece of presumption that would have brought its own punishment, and it was far from her mind. Did she look forward down the long vista of the years to come, when he would have gone away, and even the memories of his presence would have grown dim ? Well ! she thought she did : with all of us perhaps Fate plays the same trick. The mist veils the long, straight road that lies before us—the mountain-shoulder hides the steepest of the ascent—we are not suffered to see too far, lest we should sit down by the wayside and rise no more.

Meanwhile, down at Lassington, two others were getting an unexpected glimpse of a portion of the road that they had to travel.

One morning Vanessa received a letter over which she bent her pretty brows in some perplexity, and of which she did not speak to her friend till some hours had passed.

'Win,' she said at last, when their afternoon visit to Mrs.

Vaughan was over, and they had returned to their own sitting-room for the idle hour with which they usually rewarded themselves for the morning's solid work—'Win, should you think me very base if I suggested that we should take a holiday, rush up to town, and plunge into the frivolities of life again?'

'At any rate I should never expect you to resist the temptation to do so if it could be managed,' answered Winifred Marlowe promptly. 'You have behaved already much better than I should have supposed possible—we must allow you an occasional relapse! But how do you propose to break out?'

'Why, I have heard from the Vivians. You remember them at Poona? I did not know they were coming home this year, nor did they; but here they are in London, and have got a house somewhere or other—I don't know the correct localities, but you may be sure Mrs. Vivian does, and that she is where the world thinks she ought to be. And she wants us to go and stay with her.'

'And you want to go?'

Vanessa was lying back in a low, broad chair, in one of those attitudes of feline grace that would have been the delight and the despair of any artist who had made a study of her.

'I don't—know,' she answered slowly, apparently absorbed in winding her long, slender watch-chain in and out of her slender fingers. 'I *did* want to see more of London. And father would think I was crazy if I refused. I can hear him saying, "My dear child! you plagued my life out to let you go and live in London in some disreputable lodging or other; and then when you *had* a chance to see something of town in company with friends of whom you knew I approved——" But that's if I *didn't* go, and I suppose I must.'

'I suppose there is nothing against it? If Mrs. Vivian doesn't quite realise that you have saddled yourself with me, there are heaps of places in town where I can go——'

'My dear! you mustn't think of anything of that sort. The invitation is as much to you as to me, and she not only realises that you are a necessity of my existence as long as I am lucky enough to get you, but that my education is to go on in spite of all the attractions of London.'

'She knows better than that, depend upon it; and so will you when you get into the swim. But why not go, and do your London with a light heart?'

'I don't know. It seems rather base to desert the night-school, for one thing !'

'I don't think we need distress ourselves about that. I dare-say Mr. Kenyon can get other helpers if he tries.'

Winifred's tone was quite matter-of-fact and easy, but there was a little set about her lips as she spoke, as though the words were what she had predetermined to think and say. Vanessa had clasped her fingers lightly upon her forehead, as she lay back, and her eyes were watchful under their drooping lids.

'Oh, well,' she said, with half a sigh, 'I never did pass a whole year quietly in one place, and I suppose I never shall ! Perhaps I shouldn't even like it if I did. It is only the atmosphere of Lassington that makes one feel inclined to take root.'

'In that case I think you *had* better go to London,' said the other girl quietly, without looking round. And after that they sat in silence each thinking her own thoughts, being—one by temperament and the other by custom—almost without the usual feminine impulse to 'talk things over.'

As in duty bound, Vanessa mentioned to Mrs. Vaughan the next day her intention of leaving Lassington for a time ; but it proved to be one of the elder lady's bad days, and she merely looked vague and murmured something about Sir Francis's engagements, evidently remaining under the impression that Vanessa, as Sir Francis's wife, was to be whirled off again to India.

There was another person to whom the information was really due, and Winifred was conscious of a little quickening of the pulse as she reflected that Vanessa would certainly tell him that evening. Would he care ? and if he did would he show it ? Men 'in the world' had to take such events, however unwelcome, with calmness, but this was something between a hermit and an Eastern potentate with whom they had to deal. Also there was something in Vanessa's manner that her friend had never observed before.

For some inscrutable reason Miss Carroll disinterred from her dress-baskets a toilet more splendid than anything that had yet seen the light at Lassington, and one that, to tell the truth, was not very well suited to those sober walls. She had to come to her friend for assistance, never having dealt with such a gown without a maid, and Winifred laced and clasped in the discreetest fashion, asking no question even by a look.

And all through dinner Vanessa's conversation matched her dress : brilliant, sparkling gossip of that kind which deals with courts and camps, and takes on a kind of Imperial interest and importance.

It was a world of which Redmond knew less than nothing—his part in the talk was necessarily small. And even Winifred hardly knew enough of it to keep the ball rolling, but Vanessa needed little response. It seemed as though the prospect of a return to her native atmosphere had excited her to a point at which it was impossible to avoid speaking of it ; and yet the evening went on, and she had not yet said to her host and kinsman ' I am thinking of going away.'

Redmond followed them into the drawing-room presently, and lingered there, saying little, but watching his cousin with wistful, furtive glances, as if wondering at the sparkling eyes and the faint stain of colour on the cheeks that gave her beauty a new and unfamiliar look.

It was not until he had torn himself away, had said good-night in that tone of his that sounded like 'good morning,' and had got as far as the door, that she flung the announcement at him, almost too lightly to sound quite natural, over her bare white shoulder.

'By the way, Redmond, do you know that you are to be left in peace again next week ? I have been telling your mother, I have had an unexpected invitation from father's old friends, the Vivians, who have come home ; and I suppose I shall have to go.'

The young man made three strides back to the middle of the room.

'What are you talking about ?' he demanded emphatically, then checked himself and laughed. 'I beg your pardon, but this is all nonsense, isn't it ? You are not really thinking of going away ?'

'Indeed I am ! I pined to see a London season when there seemed no way possible for me to do so, and now that the way is open, for consistency's sake I could not decline it.'

'A London season ! But that lasts on till May or June, does it not ? And Sir Francis commended you to *our* care. Indeed, this will not do !'

'My father did not know that the Vivians would be in town, or he would have been more than willing that I should stay with them. In fact he is rather fonder of them than I am.'

'But till May or June!—why, it is half a lifetime! If it had been for a fortnight that you wished to leave us I might have consented, however unwillingly, but——'

'Spring is almost upon us now, and enough of the season to content a stranger like me will soon be in full swing. And as for staying on till May or June, that depends upon whether we get tired of dissipation or Mrs. Vivian of us. You see I am reckoning upon—your mother being willing to take us back again when we choose to come.'

'Willing!' Redmond echoed, looking at her with devouring eyes. 'But the question is not of welcoming you back, but of whether we shall allow you to go.'

Vanessa gave him a bright, defiant look that said, 'That is no part of your prerogative.'

Perhaps he understood the look, but he seemed to be waiting for her to speak, holding himself in check.

Did she know how provocative, how dangerously beautiful she looked as she stood there, with white swan-neck slightly curved to glance aside at him?

Perhaps she did—at least she must have known the meaning of the flash that leaped suddenly into Redmond's eyes.

'I shall not——' he began, and stopped himself abruptly. 'You may be sure of what Sir Francis would wish,' he began again more gently, 'but I am responsible——'

Vanessa shook her head slightly, smiling still, and the fire died out of his look, and he walked to the other end of the room and back again.

'After all, it is very dull for you here,' he said, more slowly still; 'I suppose I had not realised that. But is there *nothing* we can do that will tempt you to stay with us?'

'No! No!' she cried, with quick, gracious penitence, 'you must not think it is that! I—I have never been happier. But I have wanted all my life to know a little of the London world; and I don't know when I may have such another chance—probably never. If I did not take it my father would be as much surprised as all my other friends—I should never hear the last of it.'

She paused, but it was Redmond's turn to make no response, save with the eyes that had never moved from hers while she spoke.

'A short season will be enough for us, I daresay,' went on Vanessa, and Winifred thought that for once her friend was

almost nervous. 'It *must* be enough, considering how much work I have determined to get through during my year of freedom. And then if you will have us, we shall have a whole long, pleasant summer to spend here before my father comes in the autumn to carry me off to India again.'

There was a deliberate emphasis in her soft tones, and both hearers knew well what it meant.

'A whole, long summer, and then, no more ! Whatever we may think or wish, the autumn will be the end.'

Redmond came back to the hearthrug, and stood facing her, his elbow on the mantelshelf. The marred side of his face was in the shadow, and as Vanessa looked up at him she saw not what was, but only what might have been.

The feeling of unreality that had been about her ever since she came, the atmosphere of dreamland and fairy tale, vanished suddenly away, and she saw something else that might have been—a man who but for one thing might and would have been her lover.

Well, a lover was no novelty to Vanessa Carroll. But would she have said this one Nay ? lightly and compassionately, as she had said it to the rest ?

Strong in the irrevocableness of that one obstacle, Vanessa said to herself that perhaps—it was possible—that she might not have said Nay at all.

How much of that admission could be read in her eyes she never knew, but Redmond's dark, yearning gaze drew hers as by a spell. And thus they stood for one of those moments that do the work of years.

After all it was Redmond who spoke first.

'And when do you go ?' he said.

'Next week Mrs. Vivian asks us for,' said Vanessa, and her voice was not quite so steady as his had been. 'I suppose there is no reason for waiting. London will be less bewildering to me now than a little later.'

'Bewildering ?—to you ? Well, bewildered or not, do you promise to come back to us with the short summer nights ? We cannot offer you nightingales, but Lassington is not an unattractive place in the June twilight. There will still be the summer—if you promise.'

'I promise. We will have the summer,' she said slowly. One half of her—the self that knew the world and had ruled a little Eastern court, and had managed to dismiss many lovers

while keeping many devoted friends—that self knew well that it would be wiser to give no promise, and probably to make some other arrangement for those summer twilights that his tone seemed to picture so vividly. But eyes and voice were a force too strong for her—she could not refuse that promise, or even think it possible to avoid keeping it. What harm is there after all in acting out a fairy tale? when every one concerned knows quite well what it is, and knows, too, the very day and hour when the tale must end and common life begin again?

‘Thank you,’ said Redmond slowly. ‘Remember! you are trusted—you go out into the world *on parole*. And now, good-night again—and don’t begin to dream of London yet.’

He spoke lightly and easily, and looked back smiling from the doorway as he went out. Vanessa made no comment, but she moved to the window, drew back the curtain and the blind, and looked vaguely out into the dark.

For the first time she was conscious of something weird and unfriendly in this cold, silent darkness of an English February night, and for the first time also she wished that her cousin was in the habit of spending his nights under some sound roof-tree, like other English gentlemen.

Doubtless it is possible to be just as lonely and miserable beside one’s own fire and under one’s own carefully adorned ceiling as on the bare hillside, where the wind sighs in the dead winter-bleached grasses and the low clouds hide the stars. But however we may recognise that fact ourselves, it is certain that our friends will never recognise it for us.

CHAPTER X.

REVISITING THE GLIMPSES OF THE GAS-LAMPS.

SEVEN o’clock on a May evening in town, and the whole population of the metropolis apparently in the streets. Half of that world which dines was tearing home in hansoms to dress, or emerging gorgeously attired in broughams to join the other half; and that world which does not, technically speaking, dine was beginning to recruit itself upon the pavement after the long day’s work.

Threading its way in and out among the other vehicles was a hansom, in which sat Vanessa Carroll and Winifred Marlowe ; not resting and reserving themselves, as judicious elders would have done, for the evening that was evidently before them, but chattering with a vivacity that their experience of a London season had not yet sufficed to quench.

'I really think that at the last moment Mrs. Vivian would have given a good deal to come with us,' Winifred was saying. 'She would like to find out what inducement can be strong enough to make a number of women dine together without male assistance or countenance of any kind——'

'Except from the waiters. To be quite consistent I think they should have imported a staff of young ladies from the nearest A. B. C. to see us through the function. But Lotta Vivian ought to know better than to permit those stale old jokes, about the total extinction of man, that were brought out so ingenuously this afternoon. Both she and I have had occasion to hail the face of a fellow-woman as a blessed relief and variety.'

'But not the faces of five-and-forty fellow-women.'

'Well, no. But that is at any rate a variety. And when there are not men enough to 'go round,' so to speak, I think it's better to exclude them altogether. The male sect does not show to advantage under those circumstances.'

'Vane ! I am afraid you are growing vulgar.'

'Is there not a cause ? You must remember that this young man is new to me—the fragile creature who props his elegance against a door post, walks through one dance at the abject entreaty of his hostess, and shares his smiles, with infinite condescension, among five young women.'

'He'll grow out of that—some of it—in time.' said Winifred hopefully. 'I am going to ask our driver to put down the glass, Vane—there is a sting in the air to-night, and you don't quite know yet how our English May can give one a pat and a claw at the same time.'

The glass was put down, and Vanessa raised her slender neck from amongst the fluffy draperies in which she had been nestling, and looked out with interest.

'We seem to be in rather a curious part of the town,' she said.

'A short cut,' explained her friend. 'No one would bring you this way on foot, of course. We shall be out in the wider streets in a moment.'

'Oh, but I like to see it. Not that that is the proper word, but you know what I mean. It is the reverse side of the world we live in, and one ought to be aware of it.'

She looked out upon the squalid street gravely and steadily, with the dark, inscrutable eyes that had seen men and cities in many parts of the world.

'Who was it was talking of slumming last night as the fashionable *amusement*?' she asked after a moment. 'I hate people who talk like that. But I don't want to slum, either.'

'The evil is too big—one is afraid of it,' said Winifred assentingly. 'And also ashamed of being afraid, which is unpleasant.'

'London is too big—and some of the people in it too small,' said Vanessa rather petulantly. 'Don't you think it would be nice to go back to Lassington, and work?'

Winifred did not answer immediately. She did not think it needful always to seek for the man at the back of every proposal made by a woman, but in this case there was certainly a man to whom the fact of their returning so soon might seem blissfully, misleadingly, significant. Work might be all very well, but there were other problems than those of Euclid waiting for them at Lassington.

Vanessa did not press for an answer, and before Winifred had found one something startled her from her review of the situation.

The cab was passing swiftly round a corner, and the horse, not a very excellent specimen of its kind, apparently tried to tie a knot in its legs. The next instant the poor brute was flat upon the ground; there was a jar, a shock, a tremendous splintering of broken glass, and a volley of ejaculations from the driver, addressed partly to his horse and partly to the crowd that had already begun to spring out of the pavement.

The girls sat still, having nothing else that they could do. In their cramped position they could not push open the doors, and the empty frame that had held the glass was apparently, jammed by the shock, for several hands were struggling vainly to push it up from the outside.

In the midst of a babel of advice and comment the frame suddenly went up and the doors flew back, and a well-known voice said—

'Don't hurry, the glass may cut through your shoes. There, put your foot on mine. Never mind the step, I have you

safely. Why, Miss Carroll, is this the way London treats you ?'

Winifred was a little dazed, but she was not at all surprised to see Arthur Kenyon. She confessed to herself afterwards that she would have been a little surprised *not* to see him—he was so precisely the kind of man who always does appear in the critical moment.

He helped her adroitly out of the cab, as it stood helplessly tilted forward, and she stood by Vanessa on the pavement in the centre of the fast-increasing crowd.

Another cab, a four-wheeler this time, had scented the disaster from afar by some vulturine instinct, and soon drew up, and in an instant Arthur Kenyon, glancing at the relays of curious loafers and grining urchins with much disfavour, had conveyed the ladies into it, and stepped in after them.

'Here I get anywhere out of this, we'll tell you afterwards where to go,' he briefly adjured the driver, putting his head out of the window ; then drew it in and surveyed the two girls on the opposite seat.

Winifred was quite accustomed to be a little disregarded, or at any rate to take the second place, but now she was aware that the glance that met hers was just as kind and anxious and searching as that which had questioned her beautiful companion's looks.

'What a start you must have had, and how splendidly plucky you both were, and are ! Miss Marlowe !'—with a sudden change of tone—'you have cut your hand !'

'It was so indeed. Winifred had just become aware that some keen edge of broken glass had cut through glove and flesh and down to the very bone of the third and fourth fingers of one hand.

In an instant Arthur had taken possession of the little hand, and was scientifically treating it with the aid of his pocket-handkerchief, waving aside the filmy lace-edged affair that Vanessa offered to him, and muttering something between his teeth about fools and cabdrivers.

Winifred felt very little disposition to interfere with him—indeed he seemed to make it very much more his affair than hers. But she did begin to remonstrate as he again put his head out of the window, and charged the driver to go to the nearest chemist's.

'You must have this properly bound up, and I can't be sure.

of stopping the bleeding at once,' he said. 'Are you near your destination?'

'Not very. We are going to the C——,' to dine with the "Working Women,"' said Winifred.

'Shall you feel equal to keeping your engagement? Would you rather go home, Win?' asked Vanessa anxiously, and at that moment the cab drew up before the usual display of red, blue, and green jars.

'We will have this seen to, and then Miss Marlowe will be able to tell how she feels,' said Arthur authoritatively. 'If working women dine at eight you have heaps of time.'

It was a small and shabby little shop, with a shabby, intelligent-looking young man behind the counter. It is probable that he had never before seen at such close quarters the dazzling apparition of two ladies in full evening dress, but he was young enough to wish to preserve a professional gravity as he provided them with seats and proceeded to cut off the damaged fingers of the white kid glove. Young enough also to wish to keep Arthur Kenyon in his proper place as a mere unskilled spectator, but that Sir William Gull himself could hardly have achieved.

It amused Winifred to see that Arthur had throughout been sedulously concerning himself to keep the soft white silk of her dress from being soiled with blood—having indeed thought of that possibility before it occurred to herself or to Vanessa. But his entire absorption in her and in her injuries made the plain girl's heart beat quicker than the small accident or its consequences had done.

It was he who flinched, not she, when the young chemist touched the little wounds with the strong astringent that was to stop the bleeding, and that felt for a moment like fire; and looking in his face she saw that he would have given a good deal if the pain might have been his rather than hers. It was all very well to tell herself that for any other woman, and still more for a child, he would have felt the same; beneath it all Winifred knew that far sharper pain would have been pleasant so long as those keen blue eyes were bent upon hers with that look of anxious sympathy, and guessed also that—though he did not mean it—such sympathy might cost a woman dear.

The hand was washed and strapped and bound, while Arthur looked on with jealous scrutiny, and Vanessa unconsciously made the young man's task difficult by hovering about

in her shimmering cloak of rich Eastern stuff edged with grey downy feathers, with something softly gleaming in the dusky coils of her hair, that afterwards he daringly supposed to have been opals. How dull and dingy the little shop looked a few minutes later, when he had been lavishly paid for the packet of court plaster that he had produced, and had been thanked with sweet bewildering smiles ; when the delicate silken gowns had been tucked into the four-wheeler like flowers into a coffin, and the ladies and their escort were gone !

Winifred had assured her companions that she was quite equal to the dinner, and indeed would not hear of going home ; and Arthur wished to know by what right Vanessa was about to take part in the function.

‘Miss Marlowe may call herself a working woman if she chooses,’ he said, ‘but *you* !—and after abandoning the night-school too, which was your one claim to be considered a useful person—’

‘I go as Winifred’s disciple—she answers for me that my intentions at least are excellent. And what becomes of Ashden night-school while the headmaster revisits the glimpses of the gas-lamps ?’

‘It is closed during the long light evenings. And I—I wanted some things for my “first-aid” work—we have so many casualties still, and the doctor lives so far off. Also perhaps I wanted to see whether London was still standing. I had begun to think it possibly a dream or a recollection of a bygone existence.’

‘It is difficult to realise it at Lassington,’ said Vanessa slowly. ‘Is everybody well there ?’

‘As well as could be expected, in the blank and desolation to which you left us. You remember that your cousin had some rows with some of my men about pheasants, just at the end of the season ? They have been dragging on till lately, I am sorry to say ; one of the men got a longish sentence, and his comrades made a sort of triumphal procession through forbidden paths when he came out of prison, and altogether a good deal of ill-feeling remains. When are you coming back, to throw oil on the troubled waters ?’

‘Very soon, I think. London is after all less of a change to me than English country life and study. But I can’t undertake to mediate between Redmond and your navvies ; I know too little about either.’

'Your very presence would make for peace,' answered Arthur, with a little smile that made her feel that she had been unnecessarily explanatory. 'Now, we are nearly at the C——. Will this revel last far into the night?'

'We break up at eleven, I believe. Working women must go early to bed.'

'Then I shall do myself the honour to be on the steps here at eleven o'clock, and I shall, if possible, select a hansom with a sober driver and a horse with four reliable legs. Miss Marlowe is heroic, but one adventure per day is a sufficient allowance for a modern heroine. Do working women drink champagne?'

'I believe they do, upon occasion.'

'Then will these two distinguished toilers promise me to begin dinner with half a glass each? I ask it as a proof of their common sense.'

The cab was stopping before the wide porch of the C—— Restaurant, and Arthur did not wait to hear whether his prescription was to be adopted.

'You will not be late after all,' he said, as he escorted the two girls into the brilliantly lighted vestibule, and Winifred was aware that he took the opportunity to scrutinise her closely once more.

'Does it hurt you now?' he asked in his brotherly undertone, glancing at the wounded hand. 'Are you sure you would not rather be at home? I could take you and come back for Miss Carroll—she need not miss her evening.'

'No! Oh no! Indeed I mean to enjoy myself,' she answered, her pale face flushing into momentary beauty.

'*Au revoir*, then—and don't forget the champagne,' he concluded softly, and vanished among the loungers in the doorway, while the two girls went on up the broad red-carpeted steps, and Vanessa almost stepped into the arms of two young subalterns fresh home from India, who greeted her with incredulous delight, and would have torn their hair, had it been long enough to admit of such demonstration of woe, on learning that she and her companion were about to disappear into a room where for them was no admittance, even to the gallery.

'A chap I know has just been telling me all about your intentions,' said the elder threateningly. 'You mind how you let out any female Freemason secrets, for he has sworn to be

under the table,' and with that they passed on laughing, and Vanessa had a momentary vision of herself next year, perpetually entertaining a succession of these nice boys; and found the prospect a little wearisome.

Arthur walked on down the street, smiling a little to himself. He was in one respect rather an old-fashioned person, and the little freaks of independence of modern women amused and touched him as one is touched by the self-assertion of a child. When they were carried too far to please him, he considered it to be distinctly the fault of the men most nearly related to those women. In fact, I am afraid that to him woman was simply a compound of the angel and the child—now one nature predominating and now another, and in neither capacity, it seemed to him, should she be allowed to come into too close contact with the mud of the streets. As for muddy children and fallen angels, he had had to recognise the existence of both, but was not disposed to gloat over the knowledge.

One fallen angel drifted past him, and recalled his thoughts from Vanessa Carroll's shadowy eyes and the moonlight of opals and diamonds above them that had pleased his taste. His brows contracted with a twinge of memory, for the wan, brilliant face, in contour and colouring, had once been like that of Lesley Sherwin.

And Arthur had not merely come to town to lay in medical stores and to assure himself that the great world was still going on somehow. He had resolved not to be guilty of the folly of thinking himself in love when he was merely unoccupied, and had scourged himself with the reminder that to love beneath him was at once the most obvious and the most ignoble course for a man in his situation.

And yet some advocate on the other side was always pointing out how easy it would be to educate that grave and beautiful child-angel into an ideal wife for a man who had done with the world and who yet was still hungry for happiness. Pointing out, too, how cruel it would be to leave her to a life for which she was already too good, and how foolish, and worse than foolish, to think of educating her without facing what would almost certainly be the result. And some few steps—very slight, very harmless—had already been almost involuntarily made in that direction. Arthur Kenyon was a man naturally awake and alive to consequences and tendencies of any kind, but coming into the desert with what felt like a death-wound of

the spirit, he had caught, with a pardonable selfishness, at anything that promised an interest in life and in the future. And now the interest was becoming almost too keen, and the future looked complicated. For there was not only Lesley to be considered, but Valentine Elliot, who was not only in love with Lesley but with Arthur himself, and who was, like Browning's hero, distinctly 'too good to lose' by reckless blundering about among the supreme emotions.

So Arthur went on down the pavement, deep in thought, forgetting that he had come to London to see whether he could not forget these things, and that his present meditations might as profitably have been carried on by Cross Rigg on Stanmoor as in Piccadilly.

Being so deep in thought, he did not lift his eyes when some one presently confronted him more squarely than the exigencies of traffic seemed to require, but as he mechanically moved aside the other put out a hand and touched him on the shoulder.

Some magnetic instinct warned him that the touch was not that of a friend, and Arthur looked up, the lines of his spare, mobile face sharpening into the possibility of anger.

What he saw struck out that possibility, and left there nothing but watchfulness, and some emotion too deep for such anger as a rude touch might arouse.

'Ah! Mr. Waterlow,' he said. 'Is it possible that you wish to speak to me?'

The face that met his gaze was very different from the florid, somewhat bluntly chiselled visage of the young fellow who was nowadays to be seen and heard objurgating the navvies on the Ashden embankment. It was a dark, thin face, with as much promise of intellectual power as Arthur's own, but without that indescribable look that years of easy success had stamped upon that of the older man.

'Yes, I do want to speak to you,' said Theodore Waterlow, and paused an instant, while Arthur waited impassively. He believed that this man had lied away his honour, had done him the greatest injury that, according to his thinking, one man could do to another; but what then? 'A man cannot claim the ordeal of battle in these days, worse luck! and if we must not fight like gentlemen still less must we scold like fishwives. Let him say his say, and have done with him.'

The young man moistened his dry lips. 'I want to ask you a question,' he said. 'Where is Lizzie Watson?'

'I do not know,' answered Arthur concisely. 'And if I did I should not tell you.'

'We can't talk here in the street,' said Waterlow, after another momentary pause. 'Will you come to my rooms, they are quite near?'

'I see no reason why I should have anything to do with you. And I am not sure that my patience will hold out for many words.'

'What I have to say is not what you think. And what I have done is not quite what you think either. I always hated you in College days, but you had the name then of being just. Will you come?'

If the tone had been a shade more suppliant Arthur might have refused, but as it was he made a brusque gesture of acquiescence, and the other turned and swiftly led the way.

The rooms were, as he had said, quite near. As the gas jet flared up under his touch the two men once more looked at each other, and Waterlow made a sort of motion towards a chair, which Arthur disregarded. He put his hands behind him and waited with a sort of aggressive patience, his face as hard as stone.

'There is that between you and me that won't bear talking of,' said the younger man, with that bluntness that comes at supreme moments to men who, on ordinary occasions, are given to expatiating upon their emotions. 'I'll keep on the surface, never fear! But it will save time if I tell you what my impression was—what made me—act as I did. To begin with—I loved, and love, Lizzie Watson.'

'I never doubted that you thought you did,' said Arthur quietly.

'Oh yes, it was all quite simple,' said the other, with a sneer. 'You were always so perfectly in touch with all of us younger fellows, don't you know. Quite a crude everyday affair—pretty girl of the people—villain bent upon her ruin—and that kind of thing! That a girl of that class could have a soul, and that a man of my class could be aware of it; that love is the greatest fact of life, and that petty social distinctions can be brushed aside in the meeting of kindred soul with soul—that of course never occurred to you.'

'If it did not it was not because of the startling novelty of the idea. Pray go on.'

'Well, I did you more than justice, it seems. I knew that

you had something to do with her, that you had gained an influence over her that in some respects counteracted mine, and I thought you loved her too. Then she disappeared ; and George Watson, her brother, swore to me that he did not know where she was, but that you had been instrumental in taking her away. What could I suppose ?'

'Only that I too had discovered the charm of a union of souls ! So far your story is much what I had guessed. But I have felt some curiosity as to your hold over George Watson.'

'That was commonplace enough. He had been gambling, and had got into one of the petty difficulties that beset sordid and petty lives. For his sister's sake I helped him out of it, but I kept a hold over him against the day when I might need it. Now comes the part of the story that I suppose some men might be ashamed of.'

Again he paused, and Arthur's look and attitude showed no expectation of finding in him the saving grace of shame.

'I put pressure on Watson, to force him to find out where his sister was. Then he, thinking to curry favour with me, stole and brought to me those proof-sheets of the examination papers. I did not care for them—I was not afraid of not passing, nor very keen about it—but curiosity made me give them a glance. Then I saw that in those test-papers of yours you had very nearly forestalled what was coming. That gave me an idea.'

Arthur's pale face had grown a shade paler, and the cleft deepened between his brows.

'I see little use in this retrospect,' he said.

'I cannot take credit to myself for having foreseen all that would come of it,' went on Waterlow, with a dark look. 'The primitive instinct of revenge gratified itself in such ways as modern civilisation had left open to me. Watson did not know that I brought about his prosecution, but I made it worth his while to implicate you. You had baulked me, and you suffered for it. My cousin, of course, knew nothing and understood nothing ; it was easy to persuade him that you had cheated the authorities, and made him an even greater fool than nature intended. But lately I heard from him that you were at that place in the North, acting in a new character, and playing, not model tutor, but model parson. Then I began to wonder whether I had been mistaken, and whether it was not honest passion, but some effete notion of morality, that had led

you to interfere. I began to look for Lizzie, and I am looking for her still. I give you fair warning that I mean to have her—wherever she may be hidden—whatever influence you may have over her. But, naturally, I don't want to wait. Every day that she is away from me is probably deteriorating the virgin freshness of her character, and making her less worth my having. When I saw you in the street to-night I wondered whether you had had enough of interfering with me—whether we might not come to some arrangement.'

The young man had spoken hitherto in a cool, somewhat sneering tone, but it was manifestly by an effort. Now a fire seemed suddenly to break through it.

'I want her!—that is the beginning and end of it all. My life is worth nothing to me without her! Tell me where she is—and—I suppose you guess that I can make it worth your while.'

'I thought you had come to the conclusion that the girl was not under my care?'

'Yes, but not that you don't know where she is.'

Arthur felt his heart begin to beat hard and slow. It throbbed in his throat as if it would choke him.

He did not know where Lizzie Watson was, but he had kept in his hands the power to find her. What would this man be disposed to give for the knowledge on which he seemed to have set what he called his heart? His pleading had not moved Arthur a whit, his talk about kindred souls seemed to the older man pernicious nonsense; but, after his own fantastic fashion, he was evidently in earnest. Would he give proofs of the tale he had just told in exchange for the information that only Arthur could get for him?

'Do I understand,' he said slowly, 'that you would be willing to marry this young woman?'

'Certainly not. Would I insult the feeling that I have for her, and cramp our souls by forcing upon them those worn-out bonds? If the union between them lasts as long as life, so much the better; but if not——'

'If not, *your* soul is to be kept at liberty! But what of hers?—and what of her position in the eyes of the world?'

Arthur's tone would have made most men wince, but the other answered calmly, secure in the panoply of that supreme egotism that almost touches insanity—

'If I did not feel myself bound, what would be the force of

a meaningless ceremony, against which I have, besides, conscientious objections? And as for the world's verdict, nothing that *her* world could make her suffer, being unmarried, could be so bad as what my world would make us both suffer if I married her.'

Arthur was silent a moment, for once quite unable to see another man's point of view. To the descendant of a long line of landed gentry there did not seem to be any wide gulf between the two worlds that the other spoke of, or any good reason why the compositor's sister should not be the wife of the navy's grandson. But it was very plain at least that he did not mean to make her his wife, and that the fantastic notions of the modern exquisite had quite taken the place of the crude ideals of right and wrong that had served an older generation. Arthur did not know how to appeal to the former, even if he had felt it worth while to appeal. But he had to pull himself together a little before he could go on his way as though nothing had happened, for that momentary thrill of Hope had shaken him.

'You would not marry her, then?' he said slowly at last. 'And indeed I do not see how any friend of hers could wish her married to you. I suppose you are not capable of understanding that it is an insult to any man to suggest that he should help to put a woman in your power for another purpose? At any rate, we can have nothing more to say to one another.'

He turned to the door, but the younger man stepped before him.

'Stay! I reckoned upon your being too proud to refuse a favour to one who had wronged you. But I will make you an offer. When I can find Lizzie it is my intention to take her abroad, and for a time at least none of our friends in England will hear anything more of us. The life that contented Shelley will satisfy me; and what do I care what is said of me in this hive of buzzing fools? If you will give me the means of finding Lizzie, and release her from the kind of pledge she seems to have given you, I will leave a paper behind me containing the story I have just told you. When I am away you will have no difficulty in getting George Watson to corroborate it.'

A more sympathetic observer than Arthur might have seen in the other's face something more than the mere desire to get

his own way—the eagerness of a spoiled child of fortune balked for once. He might have seen there the strivings of remorse and honest desire to repair a wrong, troubling a mind that had taught itself to be ashamed of all simple and natural emotions, and needs must disguise these even from itself. He might not have despaired of bringing this affected young sinner to repentance and an unpurchased atonement, or at least to a promise to submit himself to that marriage bond of which he spoke with such lofty scorn.

But Arthur's perception was fettered both by his own intense pride, and by his loathing for this particular kind of delinquent, whom he would have described, with Dante, as being 'hateful alike to God and to the enemies of God.'

He could see but half of what was in the other's mind, and that half was totally repugnant to him, while his wrath was all the deeper because of the bitter necessity of putting away from him his own chance of deliverance.

'Will you agree?' repeated Theodore Waterlow, as Arthur paused, feeling for a sufficiently trenchant reply.

'No, I will not! And I shall not waste words in explaining to you *why* I will not. I will trouble you to stand out of the way.'

The younger man stood out of the way, as a stronger person might have found it advisable to do under the circumstances, and Arthur Kenyon passed out, taking no more account of the theatrical passion and real pain upon the other's face than if it had been a pictured daub upon the wall.

CHAPTER XI.

OLD SCORES.

'And what am I to you? A steadfast hand
To hold, a steadfast heart to trust withal,
Merely a man who loves you, and will stand
By you, whate'er befall.'

J. Ingelow.

THE 'Working Women' broke up punctually, as befitted ladies who had, or thought they had, many important engagements for the morrow.

Vanessa and Winifred were among the latest to leave, for the

latter had been sought out at the last moment by an old acquaintance, a fair, baby-faced girl, just like one of Leech's Annies or Bessies, who looked as though she had not two ideas under her smooth braids of hair, and who was in reality a brilliant journalist, and on the staff of one of the great 'dailies.'

Chatting with her, they left the cloak-room and made their way downstairs, and as they reached the hall her hand, which was lying within Winifred's, suddenly gave it a little squeeze.

'Look at that man,' she said softly. 'There ! by the door. I wonder who he is ? He looks like—a soul in purgatory.'

Already Winifred had recognised Arthur Kenyon, but his face wore, for the moment, a look that she had not seen before. He was looking out into the ever-changing turmoil of the lighted street, but with eyes that plainly saw none of it, and in them Winifred read—what she had perhaps expected to see when she had said that she could well believe that he would rather he were dead.

Only for an instant, and then he turned and saw them, and came forward with an eager inquiry after the injured hand, while the working woman, who had a real claim to the title, nodded her farewell with a demure little smile of apology, slipped out into the night, where a hansom seemed to appear on purpose for her, and was gone.

Vanessa and her friends were not fated to get off so soon, for before they had reached the door there stepped in at it a fine, greyhaired man, whom she greeted with incredulous delight as General Arbuthnot, and who from his manner was evidently a very old friend of Sir Francis and his daughter.

He had to tell his old young friend how he came to be in Piccadilly instead of North-West India, where she had supposed him to be ; and demanded in return a categorical account of all her doings and impressions of England ; and when he had explained that he was leaving town the next day and could not come to call upon her at the Vivians', the two, with a brief apology to Vanessa's companions, sat down in a corner of the vestibule to have their 'crack' in peace.

Arthur and Winifred sat down also and watched them.

'What a delightful pair they make !' said Arthur, watching the graceful and gracious dark head with its crown of jewels, and the other with its crown of silver hair, courteously bent

from its habitual stateliness. 'I hope Sir Francis is like that—worthy in point of appearance of his daughter?'

'Sir Francis is distinguished-looking, but in quite a different way from General Arbuthnot. He is slight and dark and tall, with a sleepy face that wakes up at odd moments.'

Arthur seemed to be meditating for a moment on this piece of information, and then he said suddenly—

'Do you really go back to Lassington soon?'

'I do not know. Nothing is fixed, but Vane talks of being tired of London already. When do you go?'

'To-morrow, I believe.'

'Are you tired of London too?'

'Not exactly. But—it is a mistake for dead people to come back and haunt the places that they knew when they were alive.'

Winifred flashed a quick glance at him, but he was not regarding her. Then and afterwards it seemed hardly like a confidence that he placed in her—only as though he could not help speaking, and found in her a sort of negative quality that at least did not repel and silence him.

'Dead people?' she said softly, echoing his words, because she was uncertain of his mood and would not risk crossing it.

'Yes. Have we not all known men who were dead and buried, though they might have to wait some years for the insignificant ceremony of the funeral?'

'But you—you always seem to me so much more alive than most of us.'

'I am a restless ghost—I cannot lie quiet in my grave,' he said, with an odd little smile. 'I am dead for all that—dead and forgotten. But most of the dead men I have met going about the world have at least had their fill at the feast of life, and have risen up and left the board of their own free will, and I—I think the longest lifetime would hardly have been long enough to satisfy me.'

A passion of pity wrung Winifred's heart, and ached in her throat till she could not have spoken a word even had there been anything to say. After all, the poignancy of tragedy is in the cowardice of the brave, the weakness of the strong, the cry wrung from lips that have worn a smile to the very limit of human endurance. This was the first hint of self-pity that Arthur Kenyon had let fall since he had had any misfortunes worth pitying; and to the girl who heard it it seemed that

she had known all the time what he felt, that the pathos of the moment lay in the fact that he had been driven to cry out at last. She did not know of that meeting with Theodore Waterlow that had shaken the other's self-control and made speech for the moment a necessity.

Vanessa, if such a half-confession had been made to her, would have found some answer to make to it, having learned by experience that kindly and intimate words from her had a specific value and effect ; but the plain girl had no such confidence in herself. She could only feel the utter inadequacy of all sympathy, and yet scorn herself for having none to offer. Though he was not thinking of her now, would he not by and by regret having unbosomed himself, even so far, to a stock and a stone ? But she had not reckoned on her companion's acuteness, or on that peculiar self-consciousness in him that never suffered him for long to ignore what others might be thinking. His elbow was resting on the table and his chin on his clenched hand, and now, without altering his position he turned a little and looked at her, almost as though she were the one whose trouble needed solace.

'Never mind,' he said quite simply. 'I daresay I shall learn in time that what I might have done and felt and enjoyed would have counted for very little in the general scheme of things.'

'That seems cold comfort,' said Winifred, with a sigh.

'True ; but it happens to be all there is.'

'You had better think that what you can still do may count for as much, and more,' she went on, forcing back the lump in her throat with an effort that made her voice little more than a whisper.

'It is possible. Anyhow, don't think me beaten yet. I am only ashamed that a little sympathy should have made me whine like this.'

She lifted her eyes to his, and forgot that the lashes were wet, and he looked back at her and smiled, then suddenly and of purpose changed the subject.

'Don't you think it is time we interposed yonder ?' he asked, with a gesture towards Vanessa and the General. 'I feel a duty as a chaperon if you do not. Think of the scandal, when a dinner with the "Working Women" seems to resolve itself into a *tête-à-tête* with a distinguished officer !'

'If age and honesty are no protection——' began Winifred,

trying to adopt his tone, but as she spoke Vanessa rose and dismissed the General, and came towards them with smiling apologies.

'Forgive me,' she said. 'My dear old godfather and I are always inconvenient in our affection. Last time I met him he kept a mail train waiting for ten minutes while we exchanged remarks ; but I don't know that that was any worse than keeping two tired people out of their beds.'

'I am not tired. We have been very well amused,' said Winifred, rising and trying to draw her cloak round her, while Arthur adjusted it with a quick, skilful hand.

'You look tired, both of you,' went on Vanessa remorsefully. 'Mr. Kenyon, get us a hansom, and be rid of us as quickly as you can.'

'Miss Marlowe is exhausted by the atmosphere of hard work in which she has spent the evening,' said Arthur, as they moved towards the door. 'As for me, you don't know how much I am tempted to hide the fact that your hansom is at this moment waiting for you where I left it. If only Vaughan were here we might persuade you to walk home, as on those pleasant nights in the winter.'

They were on the steps, and the hansom was making its way to them in response to Arthur's uplifted finger. He seemed to be watching it, but none the less he knew that Vanessa's fingers moved restlessly upon his arm, and a wistful look shadowed the gaiety of her face. The next moment he had packed them in, and Vanessa, all smiles again, was leaning forward to impress upon him that he was to be sure to come to see them before he left town.

'No, no,' he said. 'Some one must look after poor Ashden, now you have deserted it. Good-night, Miss Marlowe, I do hope the cut fingers will not disturb your rest.'

Some one who was watching had missed nothing of the little scene : the gesture of Vanessa's slender hand, her parting words, and the glimmer of her jewels under the lamp. He was near enough to see how the smile dropped from Arthur's face like a mask as the cab drove off, and to read the meaning of the look that seemed to have lain, as it were, behind the smile. Theodore Waterlow opened his lips as if to speak, and stretched out his hand as if he had half a mind to lay it again upon the other's shoulder. But he did neither, and the next

instant Arthur had turned away without having seen him, and the crowd flowed between and parted them.

Meanwhile, in the murmurous midnight stillness of the Lassington woods, Theodore Waterlow's cousin was also having an interview with a man against whom he supposed himself to have a grievance.

It was not dark, even under the trees, for they had not yet their full summer foliage, and there was a young moon somewhere hidden behind soft, fleecy clouds; but the two men had met just where two great holly bushes darkened the path, which narrowed as it crept between them. In the shadow nothing but their two figures could be seen—Tom Waterlow's, square, thick-set, and aggressive; Redmond Vaughan's, towering half a head above him, with feet firmly planted and head haughtily erect.

Waterlow was perhaps returning from one of those 'sprees' that had become more numerous of late, and was certainly less sober than his friends could have wished him. He was demanding, in speech a little thick and plentifully garnished with oaths, to know what right the other had to interfere with him; and Redmond, in tones rather more curt and authoritative than those he would have used to a dog, was desiring him to take himself off by the way by which he had come.

This was not the first communication that had passed between the two, for the owner of Lassington, understanding that young Waterlow was in a position of authority, had written to him concerning those demonstrations of defiance on the part of the men of which Arthur had just told Vanessa. And Tom Waterlow, to whom the writing of a polite note was always a matter of difficulty, had written one in reply verging on the *impolite*, stating plainly that he had no power to keep the men from doing what they liked, and implying that he would not use it if he had.

Some recollection of this was in his bemused brain now, for he asked firmly if the other took him for a navvy, and in the same breath expressed a desire to show him the difference.

If Redmond had known a little more of the world he would not have answered a drunken man according to his folly, but have let him pass on for the time. But his knowledge of inebriety was so theoretical that he did not recognise it in a man who could speak intelligently and keep his feet, and just

because the fellow was in a different position from the rest he determined to have it out with him. He was utterly taken by surprise when his second command was answered by a snarl and a blow, delivered a little vaguely, but with vicious intent.

Wrath was even stronger than surprise, and he returned the blow, without a thought of his own comparatively defenceless condition. And Tom Waterlow, a little sobered for the moment, but with combative instincts fully roused, recalled some smatterings of science that he had brought from the University, and struck again, this time more purposefully.

To do him justice, if he had known what an unequal battle this was that he had provoked, peace would have been made at once. We all draw the line somewhere, and Tom Waterlow drew it at hitting with two fists a man who had but one. But the light was too dim to show the true state of the case, and Redmond was far enough from wishing to call attention to it.

Nor, indeed, did he feel much inequality at first, for all the strength of his well-knit frame had passed into the one arm that he could use; and though the want of the power to guard exposed him to more than one heavy blow, he was in too towering a passion to feel them.

It was Tom Waterlow who first perceived something out of due course in this combat after it had swayed silently to and fro for a moment or two in the shadow of the hollies.

'Confound you! you don't know how to fight!' he growled, drawing back a pace or two, and standing irresolute, with arms raised to guard his face from the left-handed blows that he had found were not altogether to be despised.

'If he doesn't here's one that does!' cried a voice in an exultant, almost laughing tone, and a dark figure leapt on to the path between them. 'Come on, you great coward, and let me make a finish of this!'

'Stand back, Valentine!' said Redmond, in his deep, vibrating voice. 'Do you think I will let you interfere with me now?'

'I beg of you, for God's sake, let me take this on!' cried Valentine Elliot passionately, while the third party in this strange scene stood by bewildered. 'It isn't worth calling a fight, but let me have it, if ever you wanted to do me a favour or a kindness.'

'Nonsense! You shame me by standing there. I am man

enough for this ; or if I am but half a man let me know it, and take a thrashing.'

Redmond tried to push past as he spoke, but the other stood like a rock.

'You've no right to let *him* do it,' he said. "He's a drunken dog, but you've no right to let him shame himself with doing what he'd never do if he knew.'

The man to whom he spoke heeded him little enough, but Waterlow, tired of a colloquy of which he understood not a word, tried in his turn to push past the intruder. Valentine turned and thrust him back, with a blow that was instantly returned, and in a moment another rough-and-tumble fight had begun with which Redmond had no chance to interfere.

Valentine might at another time have felt the disadvantage of a lack of science, but darkness and confusion equalised matters in that respect, and he fought with an *élan* and a passion with which Tom Waterlow would in any case have found it hard to cope. Down went the latter twice, crashing among the fallen holly leaves, and the second time he lay still for a moment before he stirred.

Valentine knelt down beside him, felt him over, and rather roughly helped him to sit up.

'You've had enough for to-night,' he said. 'Make the best of your way home, and if you want to say anything more about this to-morrow you can do.'

The young man staggered to his feet with a little more assistance, clutched at the bushes to steady himself, and swore again as the holly leaves pierced his hand.

It seemed to dawn upon his twice-confused brain that there was something more here than he could understand, and shaking his head he was understood to mutter sulkily something about 'another time.'

He allowed Valentine to take his arm and turn him back by the way he came, and even to help him over the stile into the public road, which was not many paces distant. Once there, he raised a contemptuous and abusive shout, of which 'two to one' were the only words intelligible, and set off at an unsteady pace towards the village, while Valentine, not waiting to hear what he had to say, went back to where he had left Redmond.

Redmond had not apparently moved hand or foot ; he was standing motionless in the narrow path, and even if the hollies

had not cast their shadow there, the moonlight was too dim to read the expression of his face.

But Valentine knew what he was thinking almost as well as looks or even words could have told him.

'I have come back to ask your pardon,' he said. 'I asked a favour of you, and then I took it, being there was no time to wait for you to grant it. It was a liberty, and I ask your pardon.'

'Would you forgive a man who had treated you so?' asked Redmond after a moment, and his tone did not sound much like forgiveness.

'I—don't know,' said Valentine honestly. 'But I'd try—if I knew that he only took a chance that he'd been hoping for for eleven years and more.'

'Eleven years?'

'Ay! It's eleven years last summer since first we set eyes on one another, and I thought you'd been scaring Lesley, and I struck you. Then I found out—found out what I'd been doing, and if ever any lad was shamed, I was. I've lain awake many an hour of a night thinking of it.'

'You didn't know,' broke in Redmond. 'You told me so the next time we met, and I forgave you *that* easily enough.'

'I know you did. If you had borne any grudge I might have cared less. But as it was, I used to lie awake and plan how some other chap might try to harm you, and I might have the luck to be there, and have a chance to make up for it that way. And now at last, after all these years, it's come true. You couldn't expect a fellow to stand by and do nought.'

The other broke into an odd little laugh.

'Not a "fellow" like you,' he said. 'You did me no wrong then, and you *have* done me one to-night; but I suppose I must admit that you did not mean either. God grant that neither of us may ever mean to wrong the other, for we are not built to take it easily.'

'Amen,' said Valentine Elliot; but in his heart he knew that the prayer was granted already, and that this long-wished-for chance had settled for ever the vexed question as to whether he loved or hated this man to whom he was not suffered to be indifferent—this 'cousin' of his who was at once so much more and so much less fortunate than himself.

FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW.

Wives by Auction. THERE were days, and they not so long ago, when marriage, divorce, and re-marriage were reduced to a pleasing primæval simplicity. A man who tired of his wife took her to the nearest market town, sold her by auction on a barrel to the highest bidder, and the thing was done. This is not fiction but fact. Within the memory of living men—Rev. Baring-Gould to wit, whose years do not carry one far into the first half of the century—there was a man in a Devon village known as the poet ; his function being that of a laureate, for he composed *vers de l'occasion* when any event occurred in the parish and received his supper and a crown from the squire for his pains. This man had bought his wife for half a crown at Okehampton market from her former husband and led her back, a distance of twelve miles, with a halter round her neck. Neither rector nor squire could convince him that the transaction was in any way irregular. His conclusion of the whole matter was : 'Her's my wife as sure as if we was spliced at the altar, for and because I paid half a crown and I never took off the halter till her was in my house. Lor bless your honours, you may ask any one if that ain't marriage, good, sound, and Christian.'

And records teem with similar sales. A publican, still later than this, bought his wife for a two-gallon jar of Plymouth gin. She had been the wife of a stone-cutter, but, as he was dissatisfied with her, he put up a written notice of sale by auction. 'Her be a dacent, clanelly woman, and be of age twenty-five 'ears. The sale be to take place in the — Inn, Thursday next, at seven o'clock.' And there were a large number of bidders too, but the landlord got her. From all over the country come stories of such transfers, in which generally the wife seems to have acquiesced, many of them as late as the early 'sixties. Indeed they may be going on now for aught I know. After all they hardly differ at all from many bargainings in high life, only then the price is higher and the transaction is followed up by a Church service and orange blossoms.

Average Intelligence. And this is education as it is understood in England! Miss Dodds, of Owens College, Manchester, set the following question to a hundred primary school-children of average intelligence between the ages of ten and fourteen. Her object was to find out how far children of average (save the mark!) intelligence understand words of common use. She asked, 'What is a policeman, postman, a soldier, a king, a member of Parliament, a negro, and a School Board?' The answers came partly from a large town Board School and partly from a village school in Lincolnshire. The office of the policeman was fairly understood. It was evident that he had been used as a threat in reserve. But the M.P. came off scantily. One child stated with that brevity which is the soul of wit, 'A member of Parliament is a gentlemen who tries to make laws.' Another, 'A man what you has to vote for in elections.' A third more indefinitely still, 'A man who keeps things straight for the Queen.' 'A man who lives in the Queen's house.'

The negro fared worse than the M.P. 'A gentleman who lives in a foreign country,' varied by, 'A slave we read of in "Uncle Tom's Cabin,"' are types of the common answers. 'A negro is a blick man who acts in a circus' is an undeniable but inconclusive fact, but there is something certain about the answer that 'a negro is a man what eats missionaries.'

These children are many of them on the point of leaving school, their education finished in a most final way. Often I have met young women who all presumably graduated at a Board or Church school who did not understand the meaning of many words in common use in a nursery where there is an intelligent mother. It does seem as though one day some prophet and seer must arise to show us what education means and how to apply it. Only Heaven forbid that we should ever follow the example of Germany and drive more children to suicide with the goad of examination and no play.

* * * * *

A New Wonderland. What odd corners and strange lands and queer peoples the British Empire contains! We talk lightly about knowing our own country before exploring others. If we accepted the challenge it would be a matter of a century or two before we should venture to those other lands claiming to know our own.

There are two islands away in the Indian Ocean over which

the Union Jack is flying whose customs are as topsy-turvy as Wonderland. They are Cocos and Christmas Islands, and the autocrat of all the Cocos and Christmas inhabitants is a Scotchman, Mr. Clunies Ross. He sits on the throne, which he shares with a dusky native queen wife, and rules with a firm hand these strange peoples. At present he is in England, staying just as if he were an ordinary citizen instead of a monarch, at a big London hotel. In this queer land women have the upper hand and their rule is as the rule of tyrants. When, as sometimes happens, the husbands don't give way the wives hold them at bay by refusing to cook their dinners. Nevertheless a wife is a cheap commodity; she may be bought for a tortoiseshell comb.

For there is no money on the island. Everything necessary is supplied by Mr. Ross. Cocoanuts and fish can be had for the trouble of getting. There are no public-houses, for drink can be had by tapping the trees and letting the juice stand for a few hours. There are no shops and no fashions in this leisurely spot, and as every one has a little plot of ground and lives in a house of the same size and value as his neighbours, there is no race for wealth or fight to be on any great personage's visiting-list.

To add to the general air of ease great birds sit complacently on the trees waiting to be shot and eaten. Rats live on the tops of trees, and all you have to do when you go a-ratting is to shake the trees and the dogs waiting underneath do the rest.

About this genial spot there is a family and proprietary feeling, for the grandfather of the present Mr. Ross visited the islands in 1825 and ruled them till his death in 1854. His son and grandson succeeded him, and the present king has four sons, who, although they were educated at St. Andrews, have all returned to the island and married native wives who don't even speak English.

Keen Life
versus
Long Life.

* * * *

Is there any opening on these Arcadian spots for immigration? There are a great many men and some women whom I know who are working or worrying themselves to death who would double the length of their days in such lives of leisure. But would these same men and women decline the opportunity of a cycle of Cocos in place of a thousand years, or even a thousand days, of London? Is this not one of the questions modern

men and women have to face and settle? Is it better to live keenly, to be alive in every fibre, to work to the top of one's capacity and die ten, twenty, thirty years sooner, than to live easily, gently, quietly, just doing enough work to keep the wolf from the door or prevent the old-world disease of *ennui*?

It is not an easy question to answer, looked at from any side. Morally is it more justifiable to do everything with your might and die or break down in the interval in the service of your fellows, or to live usefully, but easily, resting when you want to and lasting on to a green old age? Economically is it better to work as hard and as fast as you have opportunity when you are young and put off your rest and recreation till a possible old age, or to work easily, making less money, using less energy and living less keenly, and looking forward to the same kind of life till death shall come in the far end? Compromise, compromise, compromise, the happy mean and common sense—this seems the immediate solution in theory. But in practice how few have ever found it.

* * * * *

Ordeal by Water. It sounds extraordinary, but I have been obliged to arrive at the conclusion that, in addition to a taste for pickled cockles, a Roman nose and drunkenness, the love of personal cleanliness is hereditary. How else can we explain the fact that some babies take to their daily baths with gusto, while others from their very first attempt shudder and give up the effort as hopeless through life? If the difference even in infancy were not so marked one might be able to put the extreme distaste to adequate bathing which the larger number of those born poor share to lack of grace (or baths and basins), not nature. But it is curious to find that what to most well-born—by which I mean born in well-to-do homes—folk is a daily æsthetic enjoyment, is to the other half of the people a terror. Often hospital nurses have told me tales of their patients' horror of water, and I see a matron of a cottage hospital, writing in *The Hospital*, gives many instances to corroborate their statements. She says:—

'We find that most of our patients have an ineradicable and apparently instinctive dislike to ventilation and water, especially water, their ablutions, if not carefully superintended, being most superficial. I remember one old man who when he saw the hot bath prepared for him on admission, wept, and said he had never had a bath since he was a baby, and he was

sure it would be "the death of him." We had less sympathy with a young man of a rather better class who, when confronted with the "ordeal by water" said, "Madam, I must respectfully but firmly decline. I am twenty-seven years old, have never had a bath, and——" Nurse interrupted him by remarking that it was high time he had one, and to his intense disgust he was helped into the water and "respectfully but firmly" bathed by the porter. Not long ago I went to see a favourite old woman, and found her suffering from a severe cold. "Why, granny," I said, "how did you get this dreadful cold?" "Well, m'm," was the reply, "I don't rightly know, but I can only think 'twas because I washed my feet!" Perhaps even better was the saying of an old lady admitted into hospital the other day. In a mild and tentative fashion I hinted at the bath in store. "Indeed, my dear, I dare not," she exclaimed, "for if ever I even wash myself I am sure to take cold."

And in spite of all the wise saws about cleanliness and health these good souls live to a very green and hoary age.

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' competitions, see p. 240.)

FIRST SHELF.

Chelsea China has been attacked both by *Bog-oak* and *Blue Roses* on the subject of her incorrectness in implying that the new century will begin in 1900. Well, it may not, technically, but we shall all feel as if we did, and she still considers that public and private sentiment ought to come in at the first writing of 1900. Poems, articles, retrospects and resolutions will all seem quite flat in 1901. Chelsea China gives hearty thanks for several pretty cards and good wishes.

VARIETY SUBJECT FOR DECEMBER.

Favourite Motto for the Year.

The mottoes chosen are 'Doe ye Nexte Thyng,' 'God's in His heaven, All's right with the world,' 'Trust Thyself,' 'Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra,' 'Onward and Upward,' and 'Childlike faith that fears nor pain nor death,' 'Rejoicing fights, and still rejoicing, fails.' The most finished and complete essay appears to Chelsea China to have been sent by *Lady Sybil Cuffe*, who has not chosen a *nom de plume*. This, on the whole, seems to deserve the prize. *Ruby* has, however, sent a very original one, which Chelsea China thinks well worth consideration. *Miranda* very good.

'DOE YE NEXTE THYNGE.'

'Do the work that's nearest,
Though it's dull at whiles,
Helping, when we meet them,
Lame dogs over stiles.'

Of course my favourite saying is a trite one, merely another way of expressing Kingsley's most-quoted verse, but it is surely time enough to look for novel moral teaching when we have practised all that has already been preached, and the truth contained in this motto is perhaps the hardest of all life's lessons which we have to learn.

It is so easy, so pitifully easy, to indulge in hero-worship, to be fired with zeal for learning, art, or philanthropy, whichever the latest fad may be, to be filled with love and pity for our humbler neighbours, and to sympathise with all our fellow-creatures in the abstract. It is so difficult, so almost impossible, to imitate our heroes in everyday life, to realise that the enthusiasm, which we in our hearts are rather proud of, is as often a passing and selfish emotion as anything else, or to believe that half an

hour of German grammar or teaching in the Sunday school is much advancing our own progress or that of any one else. And most difficult of all is it to feel for 'that tiresome woman, Mrs. Brown,' or 'that terrible little creature, Mr. Jones,' that sympathy which fills our hearts with the milk of human kindness for all our neighbours, when they are not there, or to see at the moment that to put coals on the fire or run on a message amiably is doing more good to others, and therefore to ourselves, than poring over Browning's philosophy of life, or writing an essay where we praise all those virtues in which we ourselves are so lamentably deficient. And it is quite open to discussion whether 'the low man, adding one to one,' whose 'hundred's soon hit,' is not frequently of more use to his generation than 'the high man' who, 'aiming at a million, misses an unit.'

That hell is paved with good intentions is a hard saying, but it has truth in it, and when we see how far more difficult to live with, how irritable and self-centred the girl often is who is striving to live up to a noble standard of life than she who is content to do her daily duties as they come, undisturbed by personal struggles or cravings, it seems sometimes difficult to decide whether a high ideal is a blessing or a curse—certainly in extreme youth it is frequently more like the latter from the relations' point of view.

Out of a thousand literary aspirants, one perhaps has something really to say; out of a thousand, even earnest, art students, one perhaps produces something which gives as much pleasure to others as herself. Music is a less selfish pursuit, but the knowledge of poetry, of history, and literature, generally, which one is so apt to regard almost as a virtue, after all seldom does much good to any one but oneself, while the times it interferes with immediate duties are simply countless. I do not mean to say that a high ideal is undesirable. If so, what is the meaning of the Parable of the Talents? and are we not told to 'be perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect?' while desire is one of the chief motive powers of the world. 'Who is he but a brute whose flesh has soul to suit?' But I do contend that high aspirations, intellectual or spiritual, which by reason of our natures, our surroundings, our very health, we are unable to fulfil, do make the little rubs of life more tiresome, its daily duties more sordid, far oftener than they have the effect of Sara Crewe's imaginings, and make a cold room warm. And a perpetual sense of unfaithfulness to one's truest self, unfulfilment of one's own ideal, treason to one's most cherished convictions, does, wrongly, of course, tend to make one miserable oneself and certainly not pleasurable to others.

'Doe ye Nexte Thyng.' Why, surely we can achieve that without all this introspection and bother? Perhaps—but if the 'nexte thyng' is done faithfully, then imagination, learning, and hero-worship take their true place in the perspective of life, and we shall, in fact, literally obtain that which we do desire. And if, as Emerson says, 'personal ascendancy is the only force worth reckoning with,' our ideals and aspirations will not only mould our own characters but, through our actions, will influence the lives of others far and wide, in a manner that no mere desires, however pure, or dreamings however noble, would ever do, for is it not written that 'by their fruits ye shall know them'?—SYBIL M. CUFFE.

'TRUST THYSELF.'

In choosing a motto it is not always the one one likes best must be taken, but the most helpful. Certainly 'trust thyself' is this. Every heart awakes at the cry, every nerve strains for victory when this is the battle-shout.

If every one would trust themselves as they trust others, they would be a little surprised at the result. To trust oneself is, of course, another word

for self-confidence, but it certainly does not imply conceit. It is this : in working for success one must never think of failure, one must have confidence that whatever is possible one can do. To fear failure, to look for failure is an easy road to it ; but let one turn one's back on doubt, trust to one's powers, and keep the star aimed at in view, then there is great hope of success.

It is the thinking and doubting whether one can or cannot do a thing, letting ' the native hue of resolution ' be ' sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,' that does the harm, that hinders decision, tosses one from side to side like a ship in a storm, and brings discontent.

But let one have self-reliance, let one say, ' I can,' then the waves grow calm, and the ship sails erect and steady, contentment taking the place of discontent.

' Don't think you will fall and you won't ' was the advice the cat gave to Rudy, Hans Andersen tells us, and very good advice Rudy found it ; the motto ' trust thyself ' gives the same—' don't think you will fail and you won't.'

To trust oneself one must know oneself : something greater still, be true to oneself, and fully realise all the possibilities that lie in one's life. Then, knowing one's powers and aims, one has a perfect right to trust oneself.

As so many things can be said for this motto, so a few against it, but only a few. There is, of course, the danger of spurning all advice, and putting too implicit trust in self. But if, as we have said above, knowledge of self goes with the trust, this is not so likely to happen. It is nearly useless to have power if one does not know it, or is afraid to use it. Many a genius has been hidden through want of self-confidence.

The world after all is nothing but a mighty battlefield, where war wages for ever. Foes of all kinds press in on every side. There is no cause for hesitation, we must buckle on our armour, and, with trust in a God above and trust in ourselves, fight for victory, with the words, ' I will not be defeated,' on our lips. If we have not faith in ourselves to do this, if we heed the ' croaking ravens ' who stand round ever ready to suggest new dangers and steal hope, does this look like victory ? No ; we must stop all doubt ; and all who suggest doubt—

' Bid them go and frighten cravens ;
Tell them straight we mean to win.'

Then if we do take our stand thus, intent on victory, it will not merely be a happy may be, but we are bound to win. Not only do we win, we prove by our faith there is a God, we prove that truth and virtue rule the world ; and whenever we fear and draw back we are false to our colours, we are cowards.

In ' Gareth and Lynette ' we have a splendid example of the fearless confidence of youth, and that confidence should always be ours.

Nature loves the daring, and although she may strike them down sometimes, it is only to prove their confidence and test their courage. Gareth despised danger, he never thought of failure, he laughed and loved and rode for the right. If we wish to trust ourselves we must have courage ; in a sense this trust is only another name for courage, one must go with the other ; and this will carry us over the stony way of life, until—

' Through earth's night of grief and fear that gladdening cry shall ring :
" Make way for Love, for Truth, for God ! Make way ! the King ! the King ! " '

RUBY.

PRIZE WINNER FOR DECEMBER.

The Lady Sybil Cuffe, 2, Rutland Gardens, S.W.

SUBJECT FOR FEBRUARY.

Discuss Mr. Watts-Dunton's novel ' Aylwin.'

SECOND SHELF.

PROSE COMPETITION FOR DECEMBER.

The Month of December.

The month of December has not proved particularly inspiring, and no doubt has been very busy. *Tartar* appears to be best, though *Skena Vaw* comes very near. Chelsea China gives both. She hopes the Historical Studies in 1899 will prove popular.

THE MONTH OF DECEMBER.

December, month of leafless trees, of songless woods, of moaning winds perchance of ice and snow. Month of death, of sadness and decay, yet spite of this December possesses for all who have eyes to see and hearts to love a great and ever-abiding charm.

Look but for a moment at yonder clump of trees skirting the rounded slope of that distant hill; where in 'leafy June' itself could be found anything more beautiful than the delicate tracery of brown pencilled stems, standing each one clear and distinct against the background of pale blue sky? Hark! from behind the hill comes the faint echo of a 'Tally-ho!' Let us wait a little, and we shall get a glimpse of the hunt, as they presently emerge into the open, and sweep helter-skelter across the common—hurrying horses, breathless dogs, pink coats and all—gay spots of colour in vivid contrast to the dead bracken underfoot.

From a holly bush on our right a redbreast is pouring out his very soul in bursts of glad, decisive melody. He is doing his best to make up for the silence of his feathered companions, and for this methinks we owe him one thought at least of gratitude. Dear little faithful bird, with thy crimson breast and sweet, confiding ways, half the magic of December lies in thy cheerful song!

Very soon that sound too will be hushed, and the stillness of the woods unbroken, save for the moan of the wintry wind as it wanders restlessly amongst the trees, tossing their leafless branches to and fro, with long-drawn wails of sadness. And in that wild lament, fraught as it seems to be with memories of the forgotten past, with vanished hopes and joys, with vain regrets and fruitless longings, we hear perchance the spirit of the dying year bidding its eternal farewell to the world.

There is a promise of snow in the air to-night, and to-morrow when we wake we shall in all probability find the ground covered with a fair and radiant whiteness, the fallen mantle, it may be, of the departing prophet in readiness for his successor, while he himself is borne by the chariots and horses of Time to the far-off region of unremembered years.

But not yet is his presence withdrawn from us: he has but reached the 'parting of the ways,' and still he lingers waiting on the threshold of our past. And some there are who smile as they gaze their last upon him, in these short December days, and others weep and wring their hands, and some again go by with hurried steps and averted face, and these would fain, if they could, forget him altogether. But the children love and welcome him, and call him by all manner of fond and endearing names, for indeed he is the children's friend, and comes to them in the guise of

Father Christmas. And they crown his brows with holly, and fling their little arms about him, and as they press their rosy lips to his, the figure of the old year disappears, and in its stead we seem to see the likeness of the Christ Child blessing with outstretched hands and gracious lips the kneeling world below.—TARTAR.

It was New Year's Eve. My letters were all ready for the post, and I was sitting in the twilight, pondering over the events of the old year, and wondering what the new would bring.

Suddenly, out of the shadows, a group of figures ranged themselves before me. They were easily recognised; they represented the last month of the dying year, passing so rapidly out of our ken. December herself was a tall, spare woman clad in a garment of dull black. Snowflakes rested on her grey hair, and her face was lined and weather-beaten. Her only office in the little pageant was to call forth the different actors in it. The first was a priest-like individual, who chanted slowly and solemnly, 'Let us cast off the works of darkness, let us put on the armour of light.' He was evidently intended to be a reminder of Advent. As his mournful voice died away, I saw his place taken by a busy housewife preparing for the Christmas holidays. 'All the children will be here,' she said, 'except —' and I knew that an empty chair would seem emptier to that mother's heart because of the associations that Christmas brings. And then I saw the children who were being prepared for. Some were hard at work with books and papers, anxiety on their faces. Cambridge examinations, evidently! Others were eagerly discussing the joys that were in prospect, and two tiny mites were gravely measuring their stockings, in order to ensure that 'the very biggest one' should be hung up for Santa Claus. But there were other and bigger children. Bearded men and busy women were 'going home to mother' for Christmas. And as I watched, with a smile on my face and a tear in my heart, a gaunt, hollow-eyed figure, in wretched, ragged clothes, crept slowly and sadly into sight. His misery was accentuated by the presence of a crowd of well-clad folk, who, with heavy purses, passed in and out of the gay shops. It was Poverty. But even as I looked December pointed to a second figure, soft-eyed Charity, whose loving spirit hovers around us at Christmas-tide.

And then a solemn hush came over the room, a tender light shed soft radiance, and a bright angelic figure came to tell of the hope that is born of Christmas for all mankind. 'God with you,' he said, and as if in answer came the sound of many voices, 'Glory to God in the highest!' As he disappeared a procession came into sight. There was St. Thomas, no longer in doubt; St. Stephen, no longer in agony; St. John, ever loved and loving; and last of all the Holy Innocents, who, all unknowing, had glorified God by their deaths. Their place was taken by a crowd of a very different nature. These were holiday-makers. Some were skating, some were dancing, children were shouting over all kinds of games, and less innocent revelry was there also to drown the music of the Christmas carols. As I looked, sadly, wonderingly, December drew her sombre garments round her. A deep-toned bell sounded twelve solemn strokes. 'Then end cometh quickly,' they seemed to say, and the figures faded into the shadows whence they had come, and I was left alone with my thoughts once more.—SKENA VAW.

PRIZE WINNER FOR DECEMBER.

Miss Rosa V. Ballard, 28, St. Aubyns, Hove, Brighton.

CLASS LIST FOR DECEMBER.

CLASS I.

Skena Vaw, Ruby, Miranda, Lindum.

CLASS II.

Fa-ik, Scotland Yard, Miranda, Tom Tit.

HISTORICAL STUDY FOR FEBRUARY.

Prince Henry of Portugal, the Navigator.

SEARCH QUESTION FOR DECEMBER.

(A Seasonable Feast.)

1. (a) 'At Christmas play and make good cheer;
For Christmas comes but once a year.'
- (b) 'Now good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both.'
2. (a) 'A bowl of turtle, green and glutinous.'
- (b) 'The Salmon is the king of fresh-water fish.' . . . 'The Carp is the queen of rivers.' . . . 'The Eel is a most dainty fish; the Romans have esteemed her the Helena of their feasts.'
3. (a) 'Oh! the Roast-beef of old England! Oh! the old English Roast-beef!'
- (b) Who did make 'a bag-pudding, and stuff'd it well with plumbs?'
4. 'There were snipes, there were rails,
There were woodcocks and quails,
There were peacocks serv'd up in their pride—that is tails.'
- 'Then came "sweets"—served in silver were tartlets and pies—in glass,
Jellies composed of punch, calves' feet, and isinglass,
Creams, and whipt-syllabubs, some hot, some cool.'
5. 'There were pears and apples clustered high in blooming pyramids; there were bunches of grapes made . . . to dangle from conspicuous hooks, that people's mouths might water . . .; there were piles of filberts, mossy and brown, recalling in their fragrance ancient walks among the woods, add pleasant shufflings ankle-deep through withered leaves. . . . It was not alone . . . that the raisins were so plentiful and rare, the almonds so extremely white . . . the figs were moist and pulpy, the French plums blushed in modest tartness from their highly decorated boxes. . . .'
Give authors and sources of above.
6. Competitors are requested to contribute each a beverage to the banquet!

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS.

1. (a) THOMAS TUSSER ('The Farmer's Daily Diet.' 'Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry').
- (b) SHAKSPERE (*Macbeth*, act iii. sc iv.).
2. (a) R. BROWNING ('The Pied Piper of Hamelin'). N.B.—The line is also written 'A *plate* of turtle.'
- (b) IZAAK WALTON ('The Complete Angler').
3. (a) HENRY FIELDING ('The Roast-beef of Old England.' Song from *The Grub Street Opera*, act iii. sc. ii.).
- (b) King Arthur. Old English Rhyme.

4. THOMAS BARHAM ('Ingoldsby Legends,' 'A Lay of St. Romwold').
5. CHARLES DICKENS ('A Christmas Carol,' Stave iii.).
6. Beverages are supplied to suit all tastes! As nothing was said as to merit, marks are given to all alike, although there is certainly some point in choosing a suitable and seasonable drink, and competitors who have given a quotation about 'The Wassail Bowl' deserve commendation. It is well, too, that drinks of a milder kind have been thoughtfully provided for the temperate guests at the feast!

NOTES.—*Answer 3 (a).* Some competitors have given LEVERIDGE as the writer of the old song from which these well-known lines are taken. He wrote the music to which they are set, but the words are FIELDING'S.

(b) So many competitors have given 'The Queen' in answer to this question, that it is to be feared that some corrupt modern version is misleading the rising generation. The old version, as known to Chelsea China, and quoted by many competitors, is as follows:—

'When good King Arthur ruled the land,
He was a goodly king;
He stole three pecks of barley-meal
To make a bag-pudding.

A bag-pudding the King did make,
And stuff'd it well with plumbs;
And in it put great lumps of fat,
As big as my two thumbs.

The King and Queen did eat thereof
And noblemen beside,
And what they did not eat that night,
The Queen next morning fried.'

So the Queen had a 'finger in the pie' after all! though her share in the important business was far inferior to that of her liege lord.

MARKS FOR DECEMBER.

60: *Cymraes, Eleanor, Isabel, Lenore, Melton Mowbray.* 57: *All-Fours, Thorshaven.* 55: *A. C. R., E. T., Helen, Sophonisba, Syndicate.* 50: *Clio, Irnham, Scott, Sintram.* 45: *Klee, Malaprop, Peter, The Blue Cat, W. Adey.* 42: *Athena, Kittiwake, Trimmer.* 40: *White Cat.* 37: *Findhorn.* 35: *Cavalier, M. R. A.* 32: *Penfeather.* 30: *Nemo.* 25: *Einsam.* 17: *Honeylands.*

Nemo is credited with 60 marks for October.

Blue Wings, who posted her answers too late, and *R. V. H.*, who omitted to write 'Search Questions' on her envelope, cannot be credited.

Fourteen Streams is credited with 50 marks for November.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

(*A Menagerie.*)

1. Who considered himself and the Cardinal the greatest folks present on a certain occasion?
2. Who was reproached by his master with being 'a stone—a very pebble-stone'?
3. Who knew that it was his bounden duty to protect the family from snakes?

4. Whom did John the Carpenter pity to the extent of giving her half his rum, and what was the result?

5. Who went to school every day and had the best of educations—'French, music, and washing—extra'?

6. Find somebody worthy of 'being named in the same day' as the above?

NOTICE.—Answers (to SEARCH QUESTIONS only) to be posted before the 25th of each month to *Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon*. 'Search Questions' to be written outside each envelope.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—Have you too fallen into the error of calling 1899 'the last year of the century'? It is no doubt very puzzling that we shall have said and written 'nineteen hundred' for a whole year before we enter the twentieth century, but you may prove it thus:

If the good old PACKET began with 1851, and if you count its half-yearly volumes upon your shelves when the last is added, you will only find 96. Four more must be added to 'complete the century.'

Yours faithfully,
BLUE ROSES.

THIRD SHELF

CORRESPONDENCE.

HILLINGDON, READING.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—I read with interest the letter from Bertha Tinne in October number of MONTHLY PACKET hoping it would be followed up in November with prospectus of the School at 4, Princes Road, Liverpool. Do you not think this subject, 'the training of girls on leaving school for domestic service,' might be ventilated in your valuable work? And that some one with energy, courage, and tact might not start a scheme whereby our servants in the future should be trained on a higher platform? For surely much of our home comforts depend upon those who service us. Could not some one like our Lady of Warwick come forward in this great work? Will you kindly lend your influence to suggestions which might result in doings? And please forgive me for trespassing upon your time; it is always with keen pleasure that I read THE MONTHLY PACKET. Many years have I been a silent admirer of Miss Yonge.

Yours very truly,
MARY POULTON.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—In reply to *Gray Squirrel's* queries—

'Where does individual influence end?'—Answer: Nowhere.

'Who is one's weaker brother?'—Answer: The exercise of one's faculty of observation is not necessarily conceit and Pharisaism, though if it does not show us our own faults and failings it cannot be counted trustworthy. Our 'weaker brother' may be obviously weaker than we are in some one point, and stronger in another, and we shall find few, if any, our superiors all round, making allowances for different circumstances and histories.

'Because some people gamble, is there never to be a game at cards?' This question makes me suspect that *Gray Squirrel* is suffering from that rather common complaint which I once heard happily described at a Church Congress as 'chronic inflammation of the conscience.' As an

oldish and friendly spider, I would beg the querist not to give way to this insidious ailment, destructive of the beauty and freedom of the soul. If my fellow-spider finds her spiritual condition worse for a game of cards, by all means let her abjure them, but without sitting in judgment on others. I find a game of whist an excellent tonic for the spiritual part of me. It shakes me out of my dreaminess, shows up all my weak points and makes me perceive my neighbours' strong ones, and is a delightful exercise of intellect, memory, good temper, and patience. And oh, what a blessed relief from small-talk!

As to the theatre, I don't think it can be wholesome to go to it more than once a week in the season, and I would *never* go to see either a vulgar burlesque, such as 'Faust Up-to-Date,' or a commonplace melodrama such as 'The Lights o' London.' But I always find myself better for Shakspeare, Pinero, Sydney Grundy, or Gilbert and Sullivan.

If one abstains from buying things dangerous to make, one does really nothing to *stop* the trade, and may help to lower the wages of the poor workers risking their health. We can't all be Members of Parliament, or preachers, or Relieving Officers. Let each one consider what her sphere really is, and having discovered its limitations, work honestly, bravely, and as far as possible, *serenely* in it.

But if *Gray Squirrel* really thinks she could live more truly to God in a nunnery, I would say—try one. The noviciate would answer the question, and is not binding. But, before taking this step, I would suggest her perusal of 'Two Camels' in 'Ferishtah's Fancies,' remembering that Browning was a good man.

EXPERIENTIA.

To Chelsea China.

No, not on French cookery, perhaps, but could not Chelsea China give a subject on the 'Symbolism of Food,' or 'Our duties as Christians with regard to Food,' or 'the Testimony of the New Testament on Food'? God Himself gives all young things their first food—what doctors call the perfect food. This He gives to all, like His sunshine. Christ has specially consecrated for us all food. 'The Last Supper' was the crowning act of many. The marriage feast was the first miracle, and one may remark its object was to add pleasure and joy to the entertainment; no doubt the guests had had enough to sustain life ere the 'best wine' was so freely given. All our life is interwoven with our food. From the first meal when the *mother* resumes her place in the family after great peril and pain. The first Christmas feast, which is all joy and honour to the little child, to the last when wistful eyes seek some aged face and there is at the bottom of the heart a cold whisper of next year. And the sacraments of parting, what family does not know them? The dinner before the night mail to India or China, the effort to make all the others think 'It's very jolly, and your very good health.' Still meals are not all sad. Our soldier comes back, our bride must be welcomed; even now, though Fashion has decreed there are to be no more wedding breakfasts, the bride must still cut the cake. Surely if ever those gone before could come back and show themselves it would be as He did, 'in breaking of bread.'

This is something of what I should like to say. To make our girls feel the *sacredness of food*. How many good works are spoilt because 'the cooking was bad.' How many brains have been ruined because the digestions were not properly understood. It is pre-eminently a work of the imagination, of close attention and observation. You can no more feed two human beings alike than you educate them exactly in the same

way. The higher the standard of intellect the greater capacity and the need for variety of food. The caterpillar can only eat one kind of cabbage, but the aristocrat, 'he's a thing as can eat anything, Bill.'

GRAY SQUIRREL.

December, 1898.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—I read with amused interest *Thames Valley's* letter in the December number. May I assure her that some of us find a simpler way than to 'sacrifice our dinners (or our duties) to our books'? It was Coleridge—was it not?—who said of a certain line of poetry that had he met it running about wild in the deserts of Arabia he would have known it to be Wordsworth's. That, I believe, is the principle on which most successful competitors work. Take the questions for this month. When I first read them through, Macbeth's speech and the bag-pudding were my only certainties. The 'Roast Beef' I knew to be an old English song. No. 5 suggested Dickens—a vague recollection of Christmas shops described in one of his books made me turn to the 'Christmas Carol' as the most probable. The easy jingle of No. 4 proclaims it to be from the Ingoldsby Legends, and descriptions of feasts are easily selected when glancing through the poems. No. 2 (a) might also have been by Barham; only he and Browning would undertake to find a rhyme for glutinous, but as one quotation has been given from the 'Ingoldsby Legends' I turn to Browning. It must be from one of his more grotesque poems—is there not a mayor in the 'Pied Piper'?—and the line is quickly found. Then the fish quotations. I had never previously opened Walton's 'Complete Angler,' but the subject and a certain quaint turn in the language suggested the book. And so on. I must not encroach further on your space, especially as I have only touched on the answering of the Search Questions, and hope other correspondents may take a wider range and solve the problem *Thames Valley* sets us of how to do twice as much as there is time for when we have *only* 'all the time there is.' Would that it had been discussed at that tea-party in Wonderland! Even the Dormouse might have hoarsely and feebly suggested, 'Make more time!' but I feel sure the Hatter could have given us the recipe.—Yours sincerely,

THORSHAVEN.

To the Editor of THE MONTHLY PACKET.

28, BOLTONS, S.W.

I wonder if I might be allowed to ask the writer of the article on the Poet Somerville if among those letters there is any reference to a family of the name of Mason who lived at that date at Stratford-on-Avon? We have inherited from them a bowl of which my late father always spoke of as being said to have been used by the Poet Somerville. It is white, not large, and has hunting scenes engraved on black. The Mason family consisted of Thomas Mason, who was rather peculiar, and who died well over ninety, and his two sisters, Martha and Catherine, who both died unmarried and are buried in Stratford churchyard. I should be interested to know if there were any trace of the friendship supposed to exist between the families. It would probably be with Nathaniel Mason, whose wife's maiden name was, I believe, Clare. There are tablets to all the family in Stratford Church.—I remain, yours,

GRAY SQUIRREL.

WYKEHAM HOUSE, MARLBOROUGH.

December 15th.

DEAR MADAM,—In answer to *Isobel's* first query in the China Cupboard for December, I send the last two verses of a short poem written by Dr.

(now Dean) Farrar on the death of Matthew Wilkinson, D.D., first master of Marlborough College. I could copy, or lend her, the little poem if she wishes for it. Wishing you all Christmas blessings, and long life to THE MONTHLY PACKET,—Yours faithfully,

MARIA CHRISTINA MERRIMAN.

Enough, he murmured not! in earthly races,
To winners only do the heralds call;
But oh! in yonder high and holy places,
Success is nothing, and the work is all.
So—since ye will it, here be unrecorded,
The work he fashioned, and the path he trod;
Here, but in heaven each kind heart is rewarded,
Each true name written in the books of God.

F.

BOOK NOTE.

John Keble's Parishes, by C. M. Yonge (Macmillan, 6s.). This is a delightful record of the life of Otterbourne and Hursley from the earliest times to the present day. The chief inhabitants, the ups and downs of Church life, the local peculiarities, the birds and flowers, the indications of historical interest, are all noted, and, apart from any interest in the great man in whose memory the book was undertaken, it ought to show how much there is to know about every village in England. It need hardly be said that the picture of Mr. Keble's incumbency and work is most interesting. There is a particularly attractive portrait of him not hitherto, we think, very widely known. He and his friends and helpers did indeed make for the place a golden age. There is, naturally, one omission in the record of Otterbourne that only the writer could make. It is not only John Keble's personality that will always make that place notable and dear.

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

INDIA.

QUESTIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

3. What are the chief races of India and what are their chief religions?
4. On what grounds do we found the right to Christianize, and not merely civilize all races? Is it wise to exercise this right?

Books recommended :—The same as for January.

Answers to be sent to Bog-oak, Industrial School, Andover, by Mar. 1st.

CLASS LIST FOR NOVEMBER.

CLASS I.

M.P.; Klondyke, 40; Veritas, 38; Ierne, 37.

REMARKS.

41. All the papers give good accounts of the pros and cons of the removal to Norfolk Island.

42. *Ierne*. Bishop Patteson's death was on September 20th, not 16th. Accounts very good.

43. *Veritas* gives the touching story of Bishop John Selwyn's Melancsians collecting £5 among themselves, because he told them we ought

to do good to others. The Bishop added £5 from the offertory, and sent it to Bishop Walsham How, for a poor London boy.

44. What the Home Church can do for Foreign Missions is well thought out. All give the important work of arousing intelligent interest, and finding and training recruits. But we are compelled to add the far lower work of providing the sinews of war, as well as the warriors. This is essentially a layman's work, and thus the missionary is kept from serving tables. All should have mentioned prayer, especially the Day of Intercession, as the most important of all home work. There is hardly a mission which cannot point to some decided advance, as the visible result of the First Day of Intercession for Foreign Missions, December 20, 1872.

NOTICE.

We are asked to insert the following notice. The G.F.S. offers a fee of one guinea for the best design for a Christmas Card for 1899, with motto for the year. Drawings to be sent in to the Secretary, G.F.S. Central Office, 39, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W., before March 25, 1899. The designs should be clear and simple, and be in some way appropriate to Christmas, not *merely* pretty flowers or fruit. The motto may be a Scripture text, a proverb, or a poetical quotation.

'MONTHLY PACKET' NOTICES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The readers of the 'Monthly Packet' are invited to address CHelsea CHINA on any subject the discussion of which occurs to them as likely to interest others, especially in connection with articles appearing in the Magazine.

CHINA CUPBOARD PRIZES—

Variety Specimens. Prize, monthly, 5s.

Search Questions (Who, When, and Where). Prize, for six months taken together, £1 is.

Prose Competition. Monthly Prize, 5s., or 10s., according to merit.

RULES for the above—

(1) Papers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to CHelsea CHINA, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co., Limited; they must NOT be addressed to 'the Editors.' (2) Each envelope must be marked *outside* with the subject to which it refers. Papers under separate competitions or discussions must be in separate envelopes. (3) The correspondent's name and address must be written on every paper: the use of a *nom de plume* for the lists is optional. (4) If competitors fail to comply with any rule, their papers will be disqualified. (5) The real name of the prize-winner is published in each case. (6) There are no entrance fees. (7) Prizes cannot be taken by the same person twice in a half-year.

[The Editors of the 'Monthly Packet' will feel obliged if All Contributors will write their names and addresses clearly on their MSS., and will enclose stamps for return. Unless these conditions are complied with, the Editors cannot undertake to preserve, return, or enter into correspondence about MSS. Much trouble is saved if accompanying letters are enclosed in the parcel instead of being sent separately.]

The utmost care is taken in returning MSS., but the Editors can only hold themselves absolutely responsible for such as are sent to them at their own request.]

THE MONTHLY PACKET.

NEW SERIES.

MARCH, 1899.

THE CONQUEST OF LONDON.

BY DOROTHEA GERARD (MADAME LONGARDE DE LONGGARDE),
AUTHOR OF 'A FORGOTTEN SIN,' 'A SPOTLESS REPUTA-
TION,' 'LADY BABY,' ETC.

CHAPTER XII.

A COUNTER MANŒUVRE.

IT was to be that day, or—to speak more accurately—it might have been, and if the expected event did not come off, the fault was not on Adela's side.

Philippa had spent the early part of the afternoon in studying contrivances which were to ensure to Lord Maurice the opportunity he wanted. The thing required a little thought; the first necessity obviously being to remove Cissy under some pretext which should appear plausible, and for this purpose Evelyn, who had come in late for luncheon and had been busy with something or other in her room ever since, must be consulted.

Evelyn, indeed, was very busy, so busy that she did not immediately notice Philippa's entrance, and becoming aware of her elder sister's presence, did not look over pleased. Seated in front of an open drawer in which various ribbons and laces and also a few ornaments were kept, she appeared to be engaged in carefully sorting them.

'Tidying up?' inquired Philippa as she drew near.

'Oh, just in a sort of way. Adela and I have got all our things hopelessly mixed up, and I was trying to disentangle them a bit.'

'Couldn't you leave that for another day? Cissy has got to be removed somehow, and you're the right one to do it.'

'Why has Cissy got to be removed?'

'Because Lord Maurice is coming, and I've got an idea that we'll all of us be rather in the way, and oh, please don't be stupid, Evelyn, you must understand.'

'Perfectly,' said Evelyn, with a gleam of interest in her eyes. 'I did mean to have a regular tidying up to-day, but this is more pressing. If Lord Maurice wants to speak to Adela alone he just shall do so. It's quite clear that none of us others are going to make a big match, so it's all the more necessary that Ada should make one. Yes, all right; I'll disappear, together with the child, and leave the coast nice and clear. It won't be difficult; I'll just take her to tea at the Wiltons'; their sailor son has brought home a new talking parrot, which is sure to delight her.'

In her own mind Philippa rather doubted the efficacy of the parrot's fascinations at this particular juncture, but to say this would have been to betray Cissy's secret, which she had no mind to do. At that moment, just as Evelyn was pushing the drawer shut, Philippa caught sight of a photograph which had been tossed in there among the laces.

'That is the painting girl, is it not? Oh, and you have got the painting man too?' perceiving a small portrait. 'What a pity they never come here! Have you been seeing them lately?'

Taking up the photographs, she began studying the two faces that were so like each other in feature, yet so unlike in expression.

'Yes, it's the Alstones. But never mind about them now; I must be dressing immediately.' And snatching the pictures out of Philippa's hands, she threw them back into the drawer.

'Well, you *are* in a hurry to see that parrot!' laughed Philippa. You might have given me a minute longer. What a nice-looking boy he is, to be sure!'

'Do you think so?' said Evelyn in a rather too elaborately indifferent voice, but with her back turned. 'Do send Cissy to me, will you, and I'll dress in the meantime.'

Evelyn and Cissy being disposed of, there was still Miss Amberley to warn, which was easily done by simply requesting that she should have her tea brought to her in her own room, since the drawing-room was still in the hands of the servants,

who had not yet succeeded in restoring it to its everyday character. Remained the task of finding a quiet spot for the meeting that was to take place, a rather less simple thing, on this day of general putting things 'to rights.' The drawing-room was, of course, impossible, and the dining-room was too liable to incursions of Buttons in search of a teaspoon or a tray. Luckily the improvised fernery was still intact, the same space in which Philippa had had her explanation with Mr. Hilbury last night, and which no one would have guessed to be a bath-room, and here Adela, passive but distinctly nervous, resignedly allowed herself to be installed in the shade of a palm which grew straight out of the disguised bath.

'But you will stay here at the beginning, won't you?' she implored. 'Just till I get a little more accustomed to the idea.'

'Of course I shall be here at first. We must not do anything that would appear barefaced. I have given orders that I am to be called as soon as they have done replacing the carpets, so my going out will appear quite natural, and you needn't feel in the least awkward. But there is no hurry yet, any way; he is not likely to come before tea-time, and I have lots of things to see about.'

But although there really was plenty to see about on this most disturbed day, Philippa, for some reason, felt an insurmountable difficulty to applying her mind to merely domestic arrangements. Even while giving orders she was conscious that her thoughts were elsewhere, while again and again she found her eyes wandering back to the clock. As the hour drew near at which Lord Maurice might reasonably be expected she felt herself growing almost as nervous as Adela, until finally, driven by a strange inner unrest, she took refuge in her own room, abandoning the servants to their own devices.

There at last, ensconced in a rocking-chair by the window, she began to overlook the situation with something like a dispassionate gaze. Since her talk with Adela in the forenoon she had not had time to realise exactly what it was that she had done, and what it was precisely that was going to happen to-day.

Adela would accept Lord Maurice; she had promised, and she would be as good as her word—of that Philippa felt certain. Well, that was what she had wanted and man-

œuvred for ; why should the thought that had filled her with triumph in the morning begin to disturb her now, after only a few hours ? It is true that Adela did not love him now, at least not in any romantic sense of the word ; but she would get to love him in time—she repeated this to herself again, by way of quieting a certain scruple that stirred somewhere at the bottom of her conscience, but which yet refused to lie quite still, perhaps because the temperament which went along with that conscience was itself of a distinctly romantic shade.

‘It is *not* true that it’s only because of his fortune and his position that I want Ada to marry him,’ she said aloud now, as though answering a spoken argument. ‘I am quite sure that if he was not really nice I would even keep her from marrying him, in spite of all his money. And I have often heard that a solid liking and esteem is better to start with than over-strained sentiment.’

‘But would *I* care to start with just these feelings ?’ the second inner voice presently demanded. ‘Perhaps not,’ was the reluctant reply, ‘but Ada and I are so different. I don’t believe she could ever care for anybody in the way that I know I could if I once began. Oh, yes, I am sure I am right ; I just won’t think about it any more.’ And stretching out her hand, Philippa took hold of the first volume that was within reach and opened it at random, in the hopes of drowning inconvenient thoughts.

Unfortunately it was a volume of poetry, and still more unluckily among the first things on which her eye fell were the lines—

‘But there’s nothing half so sweet in life
As love’s young dream.’

Like a sting of fire the familiar words darted through Philippa’s excited brain.

‘Nothing half so sweet in life’—if that were really true, if to love as well as to be loved was the best thing to live for, then would she not be robbing Adela of that best thing by persuading her into a marriage which, on one side, would be only a marriage of reason ? ‘Love’s young dream’—what visions in the mind ! And Adela was so young herself—would it not be sure to come to her in some shape or other ? With her tender woman’s heart, her yielding woman’s nature, it was bound to come ; and supposing it came too late, when she was tied to a husband whom she could only esteem ?

Already Philippa had flung the book from her, and starting to her feet, was feverishly pacing the room. The forces of reaction were in full work within her. Only now did she begin to understand fully what she had done, and how in her eagerness she had overshot her own mark. In one moment she saw all the baseness of the idea which in the morning had appeared so well advised and justifiable. It was not Lord Maurice's qualities which had fixed her decision—she could see that quite clearly now—despite those qualities she knew that at any other moment she would have been quite resigned to Adela's refusal; therefore it was the worldly advantages which had influenced her—his money, as she put it to herself with almost brutal frankness, for Philippa was always inclined to be merciless to herself when once she had found herself out. And because of his money she was asking her sister to do something which she felt quite certain she would not have been able to do herself. To his money Adela was to be sacrificed in order to retrieve their fortune.

'It must not be!' cried Philippa, with one of her sudden resolutions, as she stood still, clutching her aching temples with her hot hands. 'It shall not be if I can prevent it!'

When, a few minutes later, the page-boy, according to his instructions, was on the point of conducting Lord Maurice straight to the fernery, events were given a different turn by the door of the dining-room opening abruptly and Philippa's somewhat flushed face appearing in the chink.

'In here, Lord Maurice, please,' she said a little unsteadily. 'I have something to say to you first.'

Lord Maurice obeyed in some slight surprise.

Having thus successfully upset her own arrangements, and finding herself alone with the presumable suitor, Philippa began by feeling momentarily perplexed. She remembered suddenly that after all he had not yet declared himself to be a suitor, and that there were certain difficulties in broaching this sort of subject. In this emergency a new idea occurred to her, something that would at any rate gain time.

'Lord Maurice,' she began nervously. 'There is one thing I ought to tell you. I found out only last night that people think us rich, much richer than we are, and I want you to know—I want every one to know—that it is a mistake. We are not rich at all; we have only a few thousand pounds, and we've spent a good deal of it already, so Adela—I mean none of us will have any fortune to speak of.'

Lord Maurice looked at her in an astonishment which he did not attempt to conceal. When she paused he bowed silently and looked at her again, as though he were saying : 'Well, and after that ?'

'I thought you ought to know exactly how we stand, before you—before you take any steps you might regret.'

'Are you speaking of the step I am meditating with regard to your sister ?' asked Lord Maurice in so coldly haughty a tone that Philippa almost quailed.

'Yes ; I don't think I am mistaken in supposing that——'

'That I aspire to the happiness of gaining her love ? No, you are not mistaken there. Can you tell me where I can find her ?' And he made a movement forwards.

'Ah, wait, Lord Maurice !' cried Philippa, who was standing between him and the door. 'You must not go upstairs.'

He stopped and looked at her with that same new and haughty expression which sat so strangely upon his easy-going face.

'Is it necessary to explain that the circumstances of your sister either possessing a fortune or not possessing one has had no influence on the conclusion I came to some time ago—the conclusion that I cannot be happy without her ?' he added simply.

'Oh, I beg your pardon !' said Philippa with such obvious sincerity that what there was of anger in him melted on the instant. 'Of course I know that you would never care about her money ; I really don't know why I spoke of that just now.'

'And may I go now ? I suppose that is all ?' And Lord Maurice made a more determined movement towards the door.

'No, no, that is not all !' cried Philippa, and in her fear lest he should escape her, she actually put her back against the dangerous door. 'I cannot let you go to Adela.'

Lord Maurice's pale complexion grew a shade paler.

'Does that mean that there is no hope for me ? You know that she is going to refuse me ?'

'On the contrary ; she is going to accept you, but——'

'Then what makes you keep me away ?'

'It is—oh, Lord Maurice, I don't want to say it, but I have to. She will only accept you because I told her to ; I mean I persuaded her to say "Yes" when really she wanted to say

"No." This morning she had quite made up her mind about it, but I talked and talked to her, and proved to her that she liked you well enough to marry you, and got her to promise ; but all the time I didn't really believe it myself. It's only because I'm a vile wretch and thought it would be a grand thing not only for Adela but for us all if she became your wife ; but I have thought about it now and I see that it would just be horrid, and that Adela only consented because she is so good and unselfish and wants to please both you and me ; and I see that it is not fair either on you or on her, for she is so beautiful that other people are sure to fall in love with her, and she might find out that she liked them better than you, and you would both be wretched, and it would be all my fault.'

Lord Maurice had made no further attempt to get at the door ; while Philippa poured out her rather incoherent confession he had sat down near the table, and with one big hand shading his eyes, listened unmoving. When she paused to draw breath he remained so for a moment longer.

'Are you quite sure of all you say ?' he then asked quietly, but without removing his hand.

'Quite, I am sorry to say. I saw right down to the bottom of her heart in our talk this morning, and—and your image was not there, Lord Maurice.'

'That indeed would be too fair a resting-place for such an image,' he said, actually smiling as he dropped his hand. But despite the smile Philippa felt shocked at the suffering on his face. 'I never had much hope ; she was too honest to give me any ; but I was fool enough to suppose that what I felt would in the end awaken some response. I see now that I was mistaken.'

'I hoped so too, but you see Adela is so peculiar, so—so—what shall I call it?—fastidious about—well about personal appearance, for instance—and I'm terribly afraid she will never change.'

'Don't choose your expressions so carefully, please. I know well enough that I am not designed by nature to ensnare a young lady's fancy.'

'Oh, I *am* so sorry !' said Philippa, seized by a feeling of compassion so keen that she actually felt something hot and wet in her eyes. 'But I *had* to do it. You wouldn't have wanted to be accepted under false pretences, I know. I do wish things weren't so awfully mixed, and that everybody could

be made happy somehow. I suppose'—as a rather wild thought skimmed through her brain—'I suppose you are quite sure it is Adela you care for?'

'What can you mean?' he asked aghast.

'I mean—there is no chance, is there, of your ever feeling able to transfer your allegiance? You couldn't manage, for instance, to care for Cissy instead?'

He looked at her in speechless astonishment.

'Because, you see, I rather fancy, in fact I have a pretty clear idea, that there would be no difficulty in that quarter. What you said just now about not being fashioned to catch people's fancies is not quite true after all, for unless I am very much mistaken you have most decidedly caught one fancy that I know of. I haven't the right to betray it, of course, but if you could——'

'I'm very much afraid that I can't,' said Lord Maurice with his usual quaint smile, which to-day had something pathetic in its quaintness. 'I should like to oblige, but you see it is rather short notice.'

In the midst of his own pain he actually found time to sincerely regret that other pain of which he had unwittingly become the cause. He had been as far as Philippa from realising that Cissy had overstepped the thin line which divides childhood from womanhood, and was deeply distressed by a discovery which added to the general desolation of the situation. It was to be put down to the 'cussedness' of things in general, as he told himself in a calm moment.

In a few minutes more Philippa, relieved of his presence, and beginning to breathe more freely despite the aching feeling of compassion at her heart, flew up to the room where Adela, pale but resolute, was awaiting the accomplishment of her fate.

'It's all right, Adela!' she cried as she impetuously embraced her astonished sister. 'He's gone away, and he's not coming back again. What I told you this morning was all wrong. Of course you mustn't marry anybody whom you are not sure of loving as much as ever you can. It would be wicked even to think of it.'

'But the difficulties?' faltered Adela, bewildered and relieved, all at once. 'The bothers you spoke about?'

'Bother the bothers, my beautiful Adela! We must just find some other way out of them, but this one certainly won't do!'

CHAPTER XIII.

A DEFEAT.

'WELL, this is what I call the bursting of a bubble!' one lady was saying to another on the day after the dance in Arthur Street.

The burst bubble referred to was the fortune of the Venning sisters, of which—so little had Mr. Hilbury been able to keep his discovery to himself—most of their acquaintances were informed within the twenty-four hours. In his fury with his own imprudence—which now appeared to him incredible—the doubly-disappointed suitor found a special delight in baring to the gaze of the world the true state of that fortune.

'At the rate they're living at I'd have given them at least three thousand a year, if not more. What will the poor wretches do in the end, I wonder?'

The second lady shrugged her well-padded shoulders with a comfortable, equally well-padded laugh.

'What others do—disappear, of course. I don't see what there is to be excited about. It is no business of ours, surely whether or not those madcap girls choose to play ducks and drakes with their money.'

'Will you go on inviting them?'

'Why not? So long as the money lasts they are nice girls to have at a party—always properly turned out and always in good spirits, and pleased with everything; and when once the money comes to an end they will have to vanish, at any rate, so that there will be no danger of having to know them *then*.'

'That is true,' agreed the more inexperienced of the two ladies, having taken a new lesson in worldly wisdom.

'They *must* be just a little bit cracked, but it's a mercy for us they were so,' was Mrs. Wheeler's reflection on hearing the astounding news. 'If they had been quite sane we never could have got those loans.'

Mrs. Wheeler was amongst those who were most disturbed by the bursting of the bubble, since it signified for her the closing up of a fountain from which she had hoped to draw yet plentifully in the future. A little consolation was certainly to be found in the thought that the whole borrowing transaction had been 'just a girl's arrangement,' and that she need not know anything about it, for the moment at least.

But, although the worldly-wise lady aforementioned had resolved not to drop the Vennings just yet, circumstances forced her to do so sooner than she intended. The end, in fact, was considerably nearer than either she or the Vennings themselves supposed. The details of this final development were in themselves curious, not to say sensational.

Only three days after the ball of the 'Prodigal Daughter,' Evelyn, who had left the house even earlier than usual, came home unexpectedly in the middle of the forenoon—a thing quite contrary to her habit. With her hat still upon her head, she abruptly entered the drawing-room, where her three sisters happened to be assembled, and, without making any immediate remark, began by walking straight to the window and staring out into the street, as though she had discovered there something of extreme interest. This also was unusual, and provoked various astonished questions.

'Back already, Evelyn? What's wrong with the painting to-day?' asked Philippa.

'Have you come home on purpose to look out of the window?' inquired Cissy, discontentedly, 'or has anything happened?'

Evelyn peered out into the street for a moment longer, and then, with a certain very expressive jerk of her whole person, turned resolutely and faced her sisters.

'That depends what you call *happened*,' she began in a high and slightly defiant voice. 'Something certainly has taken place, which perhaps you mayn't approve of, but which you can't undo any way, whether you want to or not.'

'Why don't you take off your hat?' suggested Adela.

'No, I can't take off my hat, because I'm going away again in a minute. I've only just stepped in to tell you that—well, that I was married this morning.'

The words were pronounced with an almost laboured distinctness, yet no one for a moment supposed that she could have heard aright.

'That you were what, Evelyn, dear?' asked Philippa, not yet believing enough to feel really excited.

'Married—in St. Philip's Church by licence—just an hour ago. Isn't that plain enough yet? You can see the certificate, if you like.'

The three sisters exchanged a glance of terrified inquiry. Was it Evelyn who was mad, or was it they whose brains

were slightly out of order? for that they could all be sane and knowing what they were talking about appeared too improbable to be accepted.

'Married?' repeated Philippa, almost sternly. 'Is this a joke, Evelyn, or what? How could you get married without our knowing it, and without any one's consent, or anything? You are not of age, and our guardian——'

'I settled him long ago, and it wasn't difficult, either. What did he care whom I was going to bestow myself upon? Has he ever seriously troubled his head about our existence? It was a capital joke, your never noticing the correspondence.'

All this might be true enough—it was quite possible to conceive the bedridden old gentleman, who, ever since their mother's death, had been to them a guardian merely on paper, acting in this complaisant manner, but the fact scarcely helped Philippa out of her bewilderment.

'But why?' she cried excitedly. 'Why? and to whom? I don't understand a word of it all!'

'It's very simple all the same. Any one with a licence can do what I have done. I wanted to get married, and I didn't want any bother about it, so I just did it in this way—that's all.'

'But to whom? to whom?' cried all three voices together now. 'Surely not to somebody we don't know?'

'You do know him, and you like him—at least you said so. It's to Mr. Alstone.'

Evelyn put up her head a little higher as she said the name, and looked her sisters squarely in the eyes, one after the other, with teeth visibly set as though preparing for disapproval. But what now came was not at all like disapproval.

'Mr. Alstone?' Philippa was the first to say in a quiet tone of interest. 'That nice young man with the nice sister? Of course we like him—very much indeed. I took a fancy to his face the first time I saw it. Don't you remember him, Adela? and how bright and pleasant he was? Oh, Evelyn dear, how glad I am! You must be fond of him, or you wouldn't have married him; and how I wish you joy and success and everything imaginable!'

And rather to Evelyn's astonishment she found herself impetuously enclosed in her elder sister's arms.

Adela and Cissy, having succeeded in likewise grasping the

situation, were not slow in following suit, and the few minutes that followed were rendered incoherent with breathless congratulations and equally breathless questions.

'So that was why you were for ever sorting your things lately,' said Philippa, a light breaking in upon her as the first perplexity began to disperse. 'But why this mystery? I understand everything else—how you could get to like him, seeing him so often as you did at the galleries, and all that; but why couldn't you just say so, and let us be happy with you?'

'Because I wasn't at all sure that you would be happy with me,' said Evelyn, a little shamefacedly. 'You see, Ralph is not exactly the sort of husband that I had meant to marry—not one whom it is very reasonable to marry, perhaps, since it's a case of one's face being pretty nearly all one's fortune—but I just couldn't help it. I fancied you might make a row, or might laugh at me for the dead failure of my grand plans, and so, in order to save all bother and argument, I just did it without telling you. I first thought of going away, too, without telling you, and then just writing; but that would have felt sneaky, somehow, so I determined to have it out verbally; and besides I can't go away without money.'

'Oh, Evelyn, it *was* sneaky of you all the same!' cried Cissy reproachfully. 'Just think of cheating us out of a wedding! Our first chance of being bridesmaids!'

'That is a little hard,' admitted even the peaceable Adela.

'I had no business to have a proper wedding,' said Evelyn, shaking her head, but with a happy smile peeping out at the corners of her lips. 'Having made such a mess of my chances in life, I had forfeited my right to white satin and orange-blossoms. I can't tell you how annoyed I was when I first discovered that my heart was running away with my head. Even now I still wonder how I could be such a renegade to my lifelong principles.'

'I never believed in your principles,' remarked Philippa. 'Oh, you dear worldly-wise creature, tell us more about it all, do! Why isn't *he* come with you? and what are your plans?'

'I shall paint, of course, since I have to do something, and Ralph—well Ralph will *try* to paint too; though please to understand that it was not his artistic genius which subjugated my fancy. We won't quite settle our plans until after the honeymoon.'

'And where are you going to for that?'

'Italy, of course—Rome, and Florence, and the rest of it; where else could I go to for my honeymoon? It'll be horribly hot now, but I can't wait. It's for this principally that we require money. You can't tell me, I suppose, how much of my share is still over?'

'Not on the spur of the moment; but I shall go into the matter immediately. It's lucky that I've got fifty pounds in the house. You shall have that, of course, to begin with, and I can send more after you, if you are really going to start at once.'

'Yes, at once. Everything is ready, you see, since I really meant to run away. I've only got to put my things into my boxes. But there is time enough yet to fetch Ralph, since it seems that you really approve of him; and you'll look after Lucy meanwhile, won't you? Of course she'll live with us in the end; but for the journey——'

Assurances and promises poured in upon the gratified Evelyn, who began to think that she might have spared herself all this troublesome secrecy after all, and who that same evening started southwards with her beaming Ralph, who, during the few hours spent anew in Arthur Street, had completed the conquest of his sisters-in-law.

It had been settled that the promised remittance should be sent to Florence, and having seen her sister off, Philippa promptly sat down and wrote a note to the bank in which the bulk of the four thousand pounds had been deposited in spring—the sort of note of which she had written many this season—and requested that a cheque for a hundred and fifty pounds should be sent by return of post, together with an exact statement of how the deposit stood. It was this question which she had been on the point of asking for three days past, but which, until now, she had delayed asking, not because it had gone out of her mind, but because she was beginning to dread the answer.

The reply was lying on the breakfast-table next morning.

'I see no cheque,' she remarked, as she pulled out the businesslike-looking missive, and with a frown of displeasure ran her eye over it.

In form and colour this letter was not very unlike the one she had received at Gilham in the February of this same year, and, strangely enough, its perusal seemed to have something

of the same effect upon her. Although this one was much shorter than the other, she took almost as long a time to read it; and again it was Cissy who—exactly as on that occasion—first became aware of a sound that was half an exclamation and half a gasp. Looking up, she saw Philippa staring at this paper, just as she had stared at the other, and, just as she had asked then, she asked now what it was that was the matter, and whether anything had happened? In more ways than one this moment seemed to be a reproduction of that other one.

Philippa, encountering her aunt's astonished gaze, appeared to pull herself together.

'Oh, it's a mistake, of course,' she said, pushing back the letter into the envelope. 'It must be a mistake. I shall see about it this forenoon.'

It was evident that she did not want to be questioned, and accordingly she was not.

Philippa had never before seen the bankers, who had been used only as caretakers, and whom she had only communicated with by letter. She felt a little nervous, but yet more perplexed than afraid, while being shown into the private room in which confidential interviews were wont to take place. It was not until a tall, stiffly-moving, correctly-attired old gentleman entered by a second door that a sudden feeling of discouragement came over her. Merely to watch his automatic movements and to meet the indifferent gaze of his light grey eyes was enough to strike dread to a heart unacquainted with the cold ceremony of business.

'There seems to be a mistake here,' began Philippa, plunging straight into the heart of the matter, principally because she did not think her courage would last out any preliminaries, and indicating the letter in her hand. 'I wrote for a hundred and fifty pounds, and here I am told that the sum is no longer in your hands; but of course that cannot be so.'

'A mistake is unlikely,' replied the bank director, with a politeness calculated to congeal the blood in one's veins. 'But if you will show me the paper in question I shall look into the matter immediately.'

Then for a few minutes she was alone, with a whirl of wild thoughts dancing a sort of demoniacal round in her brain, and which would not be stilled until the director's long and meagre shadow once more fell across the floor.

'It is as I supposed,' he remarked, in exactly the same voice as before. 'Of the three thousand nine hundred pounds deposited with us on February 25th there remain at this moment exactly forty pounds.'

'That's a lie!' said Philippa, without taking a moment for reflection. She had been prepared for unpleasant discoveries, but not for anything of this sort.

Her rudeness had as little effect upon him as the timidity of her first question had had.

'The accounts are of course at your disposal,' he went on, as though she had not spoken. 'Perhaps you will peruse them at your leisure.' And without waiting for any remark of hers he proceeded neatly and methodically to spread out before her dazed eyes all the various notes which she had addressed to the house since February, each faced by the corresponding receipt signed by her own hand. With a strange, sick giddiness Philippa gazed at them—not quite understanding—meeting only her name everywhere, and written by her own hand—how like black goblins the scribbled letters appeared at that moment!—and only half hearing the monotonous explanations which the director was saying off like a lesson, and of which each single word seemed to fall like a drop of lead on her soul. Without being capable of following his calculations, she yet in a vague way understood that everything was in order—indeed, the very assurance of the man's manner brought conviction with it—and everything being in order meant neither more nor less than ruin. Yet even with the word staring her in the face she managed to keep back both tears and any further exclamations, and to stand upright, pretending to look and pretending to listen, and conscious chiefly of the necessity of keeping up appearances. She *would* not break down before this grey-haired automaton, to whom her distress would be but another item in his day's work, to whom she was nothing now but a cleaned-out client, who knew nothing either of her or her fortunes, and who probably supposed the deposit only to have represented the expenses of the season.

And she succeeded. Hard though the struggle was, she managed to get out of the room, with a reeling brain and fluttering heart indeed, but with her dignity unimpaired. This, however, was about all she could do for the moment; she had brought the forty pounds away with her, and walking

straight into the drawing-room in Arthur Street, she threw them down on the table.

'There ! That is all that remains of it !' she said, in a voice that was beginning to shake, and letting herself fall on to the nearest chair, she burst into the long-restrained tears.

'Of what ?' asked the pale and startled Adela, opening her blue eyes wide.

'Of our money—of Uncle Lugdale's legacy. Don't you understand ! We have spent it all—all, except what is lying on the table.'

Cissy had taken up the bank notes, and was fingering them.

'Forty pounds,' she observed shortly. 'You're not inventing, I suppose ?'

'No, I'm only repeating—that which the bank director has just been telling me, and I suppose he knows what he is talking about.'

Miss Amberley, whose stocking had sunk to her lap, and whose eyes appeared in danger of starting from their strained sockets, at last found her voice.

'Your uncle's legacy ?' she managed to say with difficulty. 'But I thought—you don't mean to say, surely—it can't be that—'

She stuck fast there, and sat staring from one face to the other, and trembling like an aspen leaf.

'It can be, since it is,' said Philippa fiercely, through the burning tears, which flamed from rage as much as from grief. 'But how it comes to be I cannot—yes, I can understand, it is through *my* fault. I always meant to count up, and I never did, or else we could have stopped ourselves long ago. We've all been idiots, of course ; but it's I who have been the biggest idiot of all.

Adela had, for company's sake, taken out her handkerchief too, while Cissy, moved by ancient reminiscences, sat down rather suddenly on a footstool, and clasping her hands round her angular knees, stared hard at Philippa.

'What is going to happen next ?' she asked grimly, after a minute.

'Happen ? What else can happen but get out of the way as quickly as we can ? Sell what we can sell, and go back to Gilham ; there is nothing else for it.'

To Gilham ? At the mere word the three sisters looked at

each other with startled, almost panic-stricken eyes. The vision of the desolate little stone cottage, conjured up thus abruptly in the midst of the comfortable surroundings of a London drawing-room, had something almost appalling about it.

To Gilham !

The pause that followed seemed to be filled with the heaviness of a dull sound. In that one minute all those brilliant air-castles, built so gaily in the spring, had come in a rush to the ground.

(To be continued.)

WOMEN OF OTHER NATIONS.

III.—THE GERMAN.

THE more crystallised a type appears, the more interesting it is to watch the signs of its breaking up ; above all when we believe we perceive the vast possibilities of development it enfolds : when we realise that it contains its own motive power, and that it has only to will steadily and to recognise its resources, to discover in itself a rich store of material on which to draw, and that it can command all the innate potentiality needed for the establishment of a force whose advance will be irresistible and its nature fruitful and durable.

Is the dawn of a new day to be descried in the womanhood of Germany, where, to the casual observer, life seems carved out on the same lines as of old ? If we examine what that life is and has been, it will be easier to divine the promise, the new impulse that begins to course along old channels.

In no country is there such a wealth of intellectual life as in Germany, and the German woman in her early days takes kindly to learning, though she must still remain less highly educated than the men around her ; with these, however, education is but the means to an end, with the woman it has hitherto been an end in itself, barren, resultless, left to wither away, smothered by every device of frivolous taste and sordid care.

Girls' schools in Germany are of three classes—the primary schools, or *Volksschule* ; grammar schools, *Töchterchule* ; and lyceums, *Lyceen*, which have sprung up in many cities, and which give an excellent education ; thorough English in all its branches, German, French, Italian, Latin and Greek classics, mathematics, history, literature, science, and all female accomplishments.

Almost every child in Germany goes at six years of age to one or other of these schools. A few of the highest classes may be educated at home, but even the aristocracy, except

estate holders in rural districts, show little wish for home education for their girls. Boarding-schools are disappearing, even convent education in Romanist districts is less customary. Pupils from the country board in a family, and from thence attend the day-schools. Even the smallest towns have public schools, and big and little girls trot off to them in the early morning, with their satchels of books. This education is compulsory, and the rule of attendance is very severely enforced : nothing but a doctor's certificate is admitted, no latitude is allowed the mother, no allowance made for delicate or even crippled children. All must go, all must work at the fullest stretch, and the strain on mind and body is admitted to be a very disastrous one. Many a girl leaves the German schools with her nerves shaken and her health injured for life, and instances are not rare in which children have not only broken down, but even committed suicide from overwork and desperate application at examination time. There is little time or inclination for gymnastics or outdoor exercise, and the girl's life is a trying and unhealthy one.

In the first-class schools French and English are compulsory, in the middle-class French, and in the primary schools German only, but in all are taught dancing and singing, and some attempt at gymnastics. The holidays are three weeks in July and September, fifteen days at Easter, and ten at Christmas.

All the higher classes are taken by men, women only being allowed to teach the younger girls. Teachers have to pass very severe examinations, and their certificates are annulled if not used for two years. Notwithstanding, it is contended that male teachers have not been fortunate in their teaching of girls, and that the results obtained have not been satisfactory. One of the chief reasons given for failure is that the teachers have not expected enough from the taught. Women teachers have had no ambition to keep their places, and have suffered themselves to be ousted by men, but the profession is in a transition stage ; women who aspire to the best positions have learnt that their training is not thorough enough to fit them for the work ; trained only up to eighteen, by school methods, with a smattering of a mass of subjects superficially imparted, they could never hope to rise above the lower grades. A very common course for them to pursue is to obtain teaching certificates, and then to seek a series of situations in foreign countries, where a larger salary can be obtained than at home,

and where languages can be perfected. When a nest-egg has accumulated the teacher returns, takes an apartment, and engages sundry *Herren Professoren* and *Doctoren*, not always as venerable and distinguished as their titles would imply, and sets herself to superintend classes for girls who have completed their elementary courses. Frau Helene Lange and other distinguished educationalists are now encouraging young women to work for university degrees in order that they may be able to take equal places with men as teachers in schools. The Froebel movement is also helping them to take a larger and more efficient place, and the demand for higher education is largely based on the necessity for supplying women teachers.

The Germans have begun to realise how much physical decadence has to do with want of fresh air and exercise, gymnastics are now compulsory and perhaps in time may occupy a more important place in women's lives than they do at present. Girls abandon them as soon as they can, and there is no natural love for outdoor games, air, and cold water. At sixteen the girl leaves school, her education being wound up by lessons in cookery and needlework; to this last accomplishment indeed she has for some years given two hours on three days a week, learning scientific methods of cutting out and laying aside piles of beautifully stitched clothing, tied up with ribbons.

The rite of confirmation marks an important epoch and is in some sort an equivalent to "coming out." It is less remarkable for the solemnity of the occasion, for religious feeling or for the forming of good resolutions, than for its being the occasion for wearing the first long dress—invariably of black silk—for the reception of ceremonious visits, a great bouquet, and presents (among which a work on "The Woman as Girl, Wife, and Mother" will probably hold a conspicuous place), and a general sense of being grown up. The girl still attends classes and takes dancing lessons, she will be pretty well educated, will know French and English well and speak fluently, though with a vile accent. Her music will be good, often excellent, and she will have had some definite scientific training, have studied botany or geology and know something of physics.

She has begun little flirtations long ere this on her way to and from school, and has discussed her love affairs with her

school friends. There is very little home life—that is, the familiar mingling of the members of one family. The student sons do not care to sit at home, and would think it tame to be the escort of their sisters. The boys go out together to look for amusement, the girls gather for reading and music and at coffee parties, where they knit and crotchet, eat cakes and sweetmeats, and above all, gossip. At this age the German girl is a sentimental creature, soft-hearted, fond of poetry, and determined to be in love. She is taught to be helpless and clinging, to conform to the dead level of custom, and to study to be like every one else in all her thoughts and ways. Her manner with men is often timid and embarrassed, and her conversation stiff and childish. She is sweet, refined, and well educated, but a tyranny of small things encompasses her life ; she does not use her education, and it mildews off into nothingness.

The thought of being an old maid is a nightmare. It is absolutely necessary that the girl should marry if she is not to be a social failure, but as a rule she has little or no dowry, and it depends upon herself to attract a husband. Young people meet at parties, which are pretty numerous, even in the small towns. There are balls and concerts got up by societies and clubs, and in most towns a casino, to which the noble families of the neighbourhood and the rich upper middle class subscribe, and which in winter have one or two dances a month. In the summer, afternoon dances and open-air concerts are organised. Groups gather round little tables under the trees to dine or drink coffee and beer. Young girls walk about together, and every now and then one takes a turn with one of the officers or students. Another meeting-place is the *Conditorei*, or confectioner's, where it is the fashion to drink coffee and nibble cakes between two and four o'clock. Every man and woman in Germany is born with a love of music, and has the true musical instinct. They meet to play duets and trios, not as a superficial adjunct to a party, but really to study, to discuss, and to enjoy. The theatre is one of the regular amusements of life, a season ticket is taken, and a lady can go quietly with her sister or her maid. In the holidays many families go into the country and pass some weeks at waters or at some haunt in the Black Forest, but of country life, as we understand it, there is little. Young girls are often very pretty, and have beautiful hair, but they bloom

only a short time, are apt to grow anæmic—*bleichsüchtig*. They have no fresh air or exercise, eat unwholesome food, 'soup-meat,' preparations of pork, sweet cakes, and drink everlastingly of coffee. In no other country is there so much bad health, defective bone structure, rickets among children, terribly decayed teeth, and anæmia.

A betrothal in Germany is almost as serious and irrevocable an affair as a marriage. Notices are sent out to all friends, and it is the occasion for a great gathering, with speeches and health-drinking. The betrothed couple are called bride and bridegroom; no girl is a bride after her marriage. After the betrothal a young couple generally pass their evenings together, are allowed to go about alone, and to pay visits to friends. An engagement is often an affair of months or even years, as no one is allowed to marry till a certain sum of money is deposited with the Government. An engagement is seldom broken off, but when it lasts for long the *Bräutigam* is sometimes suspected of seeking intermediate distractions.

The young housekeeper installed in her new domain is more of a steward or upper servant than a genuine mistress. The husband exercises the closest surveillance over small domestic details, he knows the price of all articles, and how much coffee per head should be used a week. His wife does a great deal of cooking and of the lighter work of the house, even if a well-born woman. German incomes are very small indeed. The higher middle classes are much less well off than the middle class in England. A judge, a professor, a physician or a superior officer will have an average income of £200 to £300 a year, and very seldom have any inherited means. As a rule only one servant is kept, or one and a nurse-girl, if there are many small children. Life is very simple and frugal, and the lady of the house has to look after every domestic detail. In fact a German woman, once married and with a family to bring up on £200 a year, has not much time to think of anything outside her home. The first thing in the morning she is in her kitchen in slippers, with a big apron tied over a shabby stuff gown. Breakfast is not the dainty meal to which we are accustomed. The food is served roughly, and the mistress goes to and fro to the kitchen. After breakfast comes house-work, and then arrives the *friserinn*, or female hairdresser, an institution in many families, and a channel for conveying gossip from one household to another. At eleven the lady is supposed

to be dressed, and from then till one is the time for receiving visits. Dinner is early, and if there should be guests it is considered proper to give a great many dishes. There will be *pot au feu*, or thick soup ; boiled meat and vegetables ; *mehlspeise*, a sort of pudding ; and *compôtes* of fruit. The meal sometimes lasts for hours, and the gentlemen sit on, smoking, and drinking beer. The most important meal of the day to the lady is 'coffee' ; this is seldom taken at home. Every woman belongs to a club ; there are clubs for the aristocracy and for the bourgeoisie, clubs for the married and for girls, and clubs for servants. This does not necessarily mean that they have a club-house, but the meeting takes place at the house of friends in turn, or at one of those outdoor restaurants so common in Germany. Men are very rarely admitted to the *Kaffee-Gesellschaft* or *Kaffee-Klatsch*—literally, coffee gossip. Every one brings her crochet and knitting. Coffee and chocolate, cakes, and perhaps strawberries and cream, are served ; a great deal is eaten, and innumerable cups of coffee are drunk. The talk is all of the good things provided, mingled with remarks and compliments on respective toilettes, discussion of servants and household matters, and gossip and scandal about the affairs of the neighbours, the court, or the foreign colony. No one is allowed to escape comment. Any one who has done anything in the least unconventional is talked over and pronounced upon. This is generally some English visitor who has ventured to defy custom, a thing Germans rarely dare to do. 'Es ist der Mode,' 'Es ist ja, keine Mode,' being the one unanswerable sentence.

A German house looks very bare and unbeautiful in our eyes. In the drawing-room the long sofa, that altar of domesticity, is set in the place of honour. In front of it stands a table covered with a handsome cloth, on which a white 'tidy' is placed cornerwise. The floor may be parquet with rugs or covered with a coarse carpet in strong colours. The furniture, a suite covered with velvet, or some less handsome material ; stiff brown lace curtains adorn each window, and the high white china stove is an inevitable feature. There are no gay chintzes or cosy armchairs, none of the refined litter of last new books and magazines, needlework, useful and ornamental, pots of fresh flowers and groups of plants, pictures and knick-knacks to which we are accustomed. A few stiff prints or a group of family photographs decorate the ugly

paper of the walls, a large ivy trained over a wicker screen, of a dusty, earwiggy countenance, fills up one corner of the room, The arrangement of the sofa is one with which no German housewife would dare to dispense. The oldest or most important guest occupies this seat, but always gives it up if a greater arrives. Frau Hauptmann yields it to Frau Generalinn, and there is great art and ceremony in the graceful abandonment and the deprecating acceptance, with many smiles and bows and 'Gnädige Frau's,' of the exalted post. The rest of the house is prim and precise. The bedrooms are severely plain, with little beds, painted deal furniture, and no superfluous articles. The idea of any one wanting a writing-table or a sofa in a sleeping apartment excites genuine astonishment.

The distinction of classes and the art of giving the right title to each acquaintance needs a special education. A line is drawn between the aristocracy and the army on the one hand and the bourgeoisie and commercial classes on the other. The simple title 'Madame' is an affront, the aristocratic dame must be called the 'High and well-born lady,' or at least 'the High-born,' or the 'Most Gracious,' while for the professional classes there are such titles as Frau Hauptmann (Mrs. Captain), Frau Jüstizrath (Mrs. Justice), Frau Hofprediger (Mrs. Court-preacher). The wife of a clerk may become Frau Calculator, and so on down to the smallest posts, the exact gradations of which have to be scrupulously recollected. Some attempt has been made to replace this variety by a universal Gnädige Frau, but this does not always satisfy petty social ambition. To a bourgeoisie party the ladies bring their work. Games of proverbs and forfeits are played, and housekeeping and gossip is talked, and receipts and patterns exchanged. In the drawing-rooms of the 'Vons' there will be an attempt at something like conversation, but it will be a very stiff affair; German hostesses have not the art of putting their guests at their ease. Rank is highly considered; the small hereditary princes are accorded the lowest of courtesies when they are met in the streets or in society. If a Grand Duchess speaks with kind familiarity to a girl in a provincial town, or taps her on the cheek, all her little circle envy her, and the event is talked over for days after. Deep bows and courtesies are to be seen on all sides. Children meeting on their way to school exchange, not our insular 'Hullo!' but polite greetings and inquiries after their respective parents.

If the salons disappoint us, the German kitchens are delightful. Their clean, painted floors, blue and white porcelain cooking-ranges, burnished brass and copper utensils, and quaint vessels of pottery are as clean and shining as a picture. It is fortunate that they are such pleasant places, considering the hours spent in them by the mothers and daughters of the family. The servants, too, have few privileges or outings; they are not supposed to have any time to themselves, and if they finish work earlier than usual, they fill up the evening with needlework for their mistress. The German servant is not very highly trained. She goes from one family to another, serving each time in a different capacity. She will be a nurse-maid in one, a serving-maid in another, and a 'cook-general' in a third. She is untidy in her dress, familiar in manner, with a store of idle slipshod gossip about the neighbours. She gets through a great deal of work for very low wages, but needs constant supervision. She would not understand a mistress who did not pay continual visits to the kitchen, and would despise her as a bad *Hausfrau*.

One privilege is universal—'followers' are a regular institution, and it is an understood thing that the 'schatz' (treasure) of the handmaiden may pay her a visit every evening. Servants are engaged for six months at a time, and a considerable forfeit has to be paid if they are dismissed before the end of the contract. All have reference books in which the mistress writes her opinion of their characters when they change situations, but the fear of being sued for defamation of character is so great that these soon become a dead letter.

The art of dress is not inborn in the German. Bare utility is her principle in most things, and lace and ruffles are omitted on her *lingerie* because they cannot be seen and are troublesome and expensive to wash. As the custom still prevails in most families of doing the washing only a few times a year, or at most at intervals of some months, it is incumbent on every one to possess large stores of linen, many dozens of solid, wear-resisting under-garments and sometimes as many as sixty or seventy pairs of hand-knitted cotton and woollen stockings. The limited wardrobe and constantly recurring washing-day of an English housewife would be looked upon as a sign of poverty. At the same time she cannot understand the spending of eight or ten guineas on a well-fitting tailor-gown, or see that it is advisable to have fresh

and appropriate raiment on ordinary occasions. She always considers it necessary to 'dress for' every event, and her idea of being well dressed is, as one critic has remarked, to have a new gown 'with twenty yards more trimming and six dozen more buttons than any one else.' Germans are capable of a quite peculiar ugliness in their attire. Their grotesque little travelling caps, perched on the top of unbecomingly arranged hair, their unfinished collar arrangements, their coarse stockings and badly shaped boots, are all worn as if in defiance of any wish to be pleasing to the eye. The fresh morning toilet is unknown. An Englishwoman going to an evening party among the professional classes, even in large towns, in a pretty, becoming demi-toilette will find herself surrounded by ladies in high black silk and stuff dresses, and will be looked upon as ridiculously over-dressed.

The German has none of the Frenchwoman's desire to charm. She dresses handsomely because it is the right thing on certain occasions to wear an expensive-looking dress, because the Frau Avocat or Frau Hauptmann will be mentally calculating the number of yards in it, and speculating as to its cost. That it does not suit her complexion or set off her figure is outside the pale of her imagination. She has no idea of bringing out good points or softening down bad ones, and as time goes on she is too apt to give up all attempt at personal adornment, to present a shapeless figure, with slippers down at heel, without lace to soften an unattractive throat, or a headdress to veil bald patches. The grace of womanhood is lost, and only an excellent *hausfrau* remains. The German mother possesses in full the virtue of self-abnegation. She has been up working from early morning, but she will sit half the night by the wall in the casino, with her daughters' cloaks upon her arm. She goes about in a shabby house-dress, always gentle, patient, and affectionate. She has been a careful, industrious servant to her husband, and becomes a household drudge to her children. It is very rare to meet with an old-young grandmother, still coquettish, still proud of her little feet and carefully kept hands. They would be of no use to the *hausfrau*. Heine has declared that a German marriage is no true marriage, and that the man leads an isolated intellectual life in the midst of his family. This is still quite sufficiently true to be quoted. Very few men care to mix with the feminine society which their wives gather

round them. So they go to a *café* to pass their time with other men, and know little or nothing of the pleasure of conversation with women of their own class. The ordinary German wife is entirely contented with her lot; all her ideas radiate from her husband, and he takes it as a matter of course that her interests should be bounded by his house, his pleasures, and his children. His income is so small that his comfort depends on her devotion to her housekeeping. That this takes all her time and does not even attain its own uncomfortable ideal, that any more artistic or scientific method might be possible, never occurs to any one. The present German Empress has set the example, entirely absorbed as she is in her children, in dress and in the formal etiquette of the German Court. There are a few bazaars, a few societies for helping the sick, but the hard-working committees on which English ladies sit are unknown—and men do not expect their wives or daughters to take any interest in public affairs. There is a want of chivalry in the manner of men to women. They ignore them in general conversation, talking across them to one another. Young men sit still and allow the daughters of the house to wait upon them. If a man calls at a house he always asks for the master, and probably does not see the ladies at all, and both sexes suffer from the estrangement from one another which runs through society.

If the existence of a wife and mother is prosaic and unattractive, that of the unmarried spinster is more unenviable still. She is a failure in her own eyes and those of everybody else. As long as her father and mother live she remains in the subservience of a child, even though she should have reached middle age. She cannot read a book or make a friend without asking permission. She is at every one's beck and call, unthanked and unrewarded. She is without amusements, interests or occupations, fenced in with dreary conventions and fear of gossip. She is generally terribly poor, but though the German will work like a servant in her own home she would think it entirely beneath her to do paid work for her own living, and thousands, of good birth, virtually starve sooner than undertake any remunerative employment, living the dullest and most subordinate of lives, drudging on sufferance in the house of some richer relative, pinching and screwing to keep up an appearance and to fulfil all the petty obligations imposed by society. Women earning

their own bread are seldom welcomed into the higher circles, unless they have won their way by distinguished success; lower down in the scale of the official and professional classes there is still a strong prejudice against girls and unmarried women working for pay, and many still remain the victims of antiquated tradition and foolish social conventionality.

The *Stift* is an institution or sort of lay-convent for the unmarried women of aristocratic families, established by succeeding benefactors in various parts of the country. Those who have added to its endowment have a right to claim its benefits for their elderly unmarried sisters or daughters. An abbess is elected, always of noble family, and besides board and lodging the lady may claim a small allowance, about £25 a year. Residence within the walls of the asylum is only compulsory for a few months or even weeks of the year, and the *Stift-dame* while in residence may visit freely and have her friends to see her. Sometimes in later life a girl who has not succeeded in marrying becomes a deaconess, but it is difficult to find that religion or spiritual devotion takes any large place in life. Sacred subjects are handled with a peculiar prosaic absence of reverence, non-believers are not restrained by good taste or convention from turning Christianity into ridicule, the clergy are men of the lower middle class, half-trained and insignificant; freethought and scientific enthusiasm have made religion into a thing of dry bones and discredited it among the learned minds of the country. The Emperor is a really religious man, and religion still finds a home among the Catholic families, but 'the flat monotony of non-belief' has widely affected the country and has deprived too many of its daughters of the grace and poetry of a pure and tender faith.

By law the German woman is in a condition of tutelage, and as a wife and mother is subject to the principles of pre-civilised epochs. By marriage she is deprived of control over her property and actions and of all rights over her children. The new Civil Code which comes into force in 1900 will touch family life at many points. The position it proposes for women generally, and especially for married women, has been received with an outburst of indignation. Hitherto women have not been allowed to trade under their own names; it will give full licence to an unmarried woman, but revokes it if she marries. The married woman's rights over

her property remain *nil*. There is nothing in Germany corresponding to the Married Women's Property Act. Her control over her children after they reach four years is reduced to that possessed by an inebriate or immoral father, and is supplemented by a guardian, legally appointed. If she marries again she loses all rights over her children. The Bill speaks of parental instead of paternal rights, but vests these in one parent, the father. A woman has no capacity of guardianship and cannot witness legal documents, and is debarred from calling a public meeting, or from attending a political one. This Bill was protested against by meetings at which women were the only speakers, and the amendment which would have remedied it was rejected in the Reichstag by a narrow majority in the face of the opposition of 'hundreds and thousands of citizens, men of art, science, and letters.' On the whole German men are exceedingly kind fathers and husbands, and there is much happy family life, but the intrinsic injustice of the position of half the population is attracting wide attention, and in the forefront of the intellectual and spiritual ferment of the country we find a vast movement for the emancipation of women. The sad, wailing voice begins to be heard of domestic tragedies, of natures crushed by unremitting toil and sordid cares, a revolt against a bare, unlovely existence, against trammels which cripple the mind and stunt the nature, and against an order of life which refuses to allow women to use their capacities.

Hitherto the openings for those who take up a profession have been few and unattractive. Teaching is the principal one, but, as has already been remarked, the Government examinations are severe, the life is a hard one, the pay is very poor, and the opportunities for rising are limited. Hospital nursing is almost the only other. Nurses are given a thorough training in hospitals and are able to hear special courses of lectures in anatomy, physiology, and pharmacy. Their lives are fully engaged: they manage departments for children and cripples, kindergartens, and homes for the poor. In a country where philanthropy does not play much part, theirs is the most philanthropic work known, and nothing can exceed the tenderness with which they perform it, but they are still behind us, and there is not that widespread zeal for the life which is so remarkable among our

young women. Dentists are numerous, and one conducts a small hospital for women. Only now, after years of petitioning, have women been allowed to practise medicine. Even these must still obtain their training and degrees abroad ; about a dozen are practising in various parts of Germany, but patients are slow to employ them.

In 1887 a petition was presented to the Ministry of Education, with a pamphlet written by Helene Lange, which asked that measures should be taken to provide education to fit women for the higher teaching, especially German and religious knowledge. This very moderate demand raised a storm of controversy, in spite of which steps were steadily taken to reach the desired end. In Berlin already existed an institution aiming at higher education, the Victoria Lyceum, founded by an Englishwoman, Miss Archer, under the patronage of the Empress Frederick (then Crown Princess). In 1888, having grown to be of some importance, the same influence procured a small grant of money towards establishing advanced classes for teachers, upon university lines. Each course was to occupy three years and to lead to independent work from original authorities. Similar courses were soon established at Göttingen, and in 1894 the Minister of Education issued a resolution that an examination, admitting women to head teacherships, should take place every year. It was also laid down that in all girls' schools where the principal is a man, a woman shall be associated with him in the management, and that at least one of the three upper classes shall be in the hands of women.

Gymnasium classes have been started in many great towns, for girls who aspire to the certificate necessary for taking a full university course. All these classes aim at the same end : the opening of the universities. These still throw a good many difficulties in the way. In some these are growing fewer, and women are allowed to attend courses by special permission. In theory their presence at lectures is forbidden, and each professor may use his discretion as to their admission as 'guest-students,' but in some colleges, notably Göttingen, they have been welcomed by leading professors ; at Heidelberg they are allowed to proceed to the degree, and over two hundred are now studying in the University of Berlin alone. Numbers of leading men of learning rely on the help and co-operation of wife or sister, and women have been largely associated

in many of the great works produced in late years in Germany.

In the lower ranks the State has a prejudice against female employees, and these only find situations as railway ticket sellers and telegraphists. There are a great many female clerks. Several excellent schools of business have been established in connection with the societies—*Lette Verein, Hilfsverein, &c.*—which concern themselves with the employment of middle-class women. One registry in Berlin in one year (1896) found places for 472 women as corresponding clerks, bookkeepers, cashiers, shorthand writers, and typists, as compared with 314 the year before, and another office placed 230 of the same sort of applicants. The *Lette Verein*, in Berlin, was founded in 1866 by Dr. Lette for protecting the interests of women in employments, finding them new ones and educating them to undertake more profitable work. It corresponds in some degree with our Polytechnics, giving much attention to practical instruction, and is particularly successful in turning out first-rate cooks, and workers able to do embroidery of great beauty with finished skill, and the schools of art and design have turned out many trained women. It also produces the third-rate milliner and dressmaker, and puts the unambitious young woman in the way of making her own tasteless gowns or of drifting into some low-paid employment, but on the whole this institution has benefited thousands, and similar organisations have been established in many parts of Germany.

There are many women doing hard work on fashion journals, but the German newspaper does not offer an opening to the essayist or the writer of light descriptive articles. The ordinary German would think the editor of the organ he patronises was losing his head if he came upon the sort of article we are familiar with in the evening gazettes and which we even occasionally meet in the morning journals. A long series on the Code of Civil Law as it concerns women may find admission, or some other topic of deep and solid interest, seriously treated. The proceedings of women's meetings and the progress of their cause are chronicled in *Die Frauenbewegung*, an excellent monthly magazine, and *Die Frau*, a Social Democrat organ, both edited by ladies. Women in Germany do not open bazaars, lay foundation-stones, and say a few well-chosen nothings. They speak, and speak remark-

ably well, but all those who come to the front do so of set and earnest purpose.

Miss Bateson, writing on interviews with leading women in Berlin, says that no one at first sight gives you firmer assurance of having remained the same, when you re-visit her after an interval of some years, than the German woman. She seems to be living the same life, wearing the same clothes, taking the same practical interest in household management as she did twenty years ago, but by degrees you become sensible of the great change that is taking place. It is no longer the invariable rule for women to sit mum while men talk across them. They have taken courage and are beginning to take their lives into their own hands. They begin to lecture to their own sex and to inspire it with bold ideas for securing education on more scientific principles, and for making it lead on to some definite end. Everywhere German women find a new pleasure in listening to and consulting one another, they keep their modest demeanour, but more and more enter the universities, and the love of thoroughness which is so marked a feature in the Teutonic character impels them to strive for the utmost development of their faculties. They are becoming writers in great numbers, and everywhere giving voice to the struggle for emancipation. Johanna Ambrosius is one of the most interesting of these. Three years ago she was not known outside an East Prussian village, where she led the humble life of a poor peasant's wife. Now her poems have passed through twenty-seven editions, and she is talked of all over Germany. She makes her readers realise the tragedy of lives bounded by a monotonous and prosaic horizon, the more so that many of those readers know that young, beautiful, and learned as they may be, that horizon has hitherto been the same for all alike, but, says Professor Francke, this poetess has no hopeless repining, she has the ideal quality, simple and romantic, which is the saving grace of the Teutonic people. "Even in her saddest moods we recognise a bravely struggling soul, a character faithful to itself, a heart embracing all mankind."

Noble women are arising to bring all the practicality of the past, mingled with a wise enthusiasm, to bear upon the hunger for employment in their own class, and the grievance of over-toil among the lower orders. It is interesting to note that among these no one has exercised a wiser and wider in-

fluence than the Empress Frederick. The agricultural question has come up, and a Girls' School of Gardening has been opened in Berlin and one in Saxony, for teaching horticulture and especially the cultivation of the vine on improved principles. In an excellent paper on the service of the community, Frau Lippmann appealed to her audience to promote the appointment of women as guardians of the poor, matrons of public orphanages, members of school and prison committees, and societies for the preservation of morality, and as attendants on female lunatics. Tentative efforts are being made to enable women to enter a legal career. They are advised to obtain a doctor's degree in jurisprudence in Zurich, to acquire practical knowledge as lawyers' clerks in Berlin, and to open bureaux for legal consultation, or to obtain situations as teachers of jurisprudence, or writers on legal matters. In Germany, as elsewhere, the number of women forced to maintain themselves is increasing year by year, a means of livelihood must be found and they press on in spite of opposition from men; for one great obstacle German women have to encounter is the overcrowding of all professions, especially that of medicine, in which the number of doctors is quite out of proportion to the population.

In 1890 it was computed that 625,719 women were employed in German factories, 72,692 being under sixteen and 223,558 under twenty-one. A paper recently published in the *Economic Journal* states that, altogether, about 40 % of the female population are trying to earn a living, of which 5 to 6 % belong to the servant class. Taking Berlin and Breslau as representative cities, the average weekly wages paid in factories is 8 to 9 marks and 4 to 5.45 in Breslau. The cost of living is 50 % higher in the capital. No female can be employed in a factory after 8.30 at night or before 5.30 a.m. On the eve of holidays work must end at 5.30 p.m. No girl above sixteen must work more than eleven hours in a factory, with one hour's rest at mid-day, or if manager of a house, one and a half hours. No woman may work for four weeks after confinement, with a doctor's certificate, or six weeks without one. No hours may be augmented by overtime to exceed eighty a week. Females may not be employed underground, in forges, smelting, or glass works, and restrictions are placed on their employment in lead, cigar, gutta percha factories, and in wire-drawing works. In Berlin nearly all the women in shops are unmarried, and more

than half are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. Their earnings vary from £2 a month to £5 in the sixteenth year of service. The hours are long, 9.30 a.m. to 10.30 p.m., but a mid-day interval of from one to two hours must be given. In small shops the employees may be dismissed without warning, but shops employing above a certain number must give notice of varying length. An elaborate system of inspection exists, but employers show much ingenuity in continuing evasions, and the advisability of appointing female inspectors has been discussed in the Reichstag itself. In Berlin women are largely engaged in the fustian trade, and wages range from 30s. for the very skilful, 18s. to a fair number, and 11s. to 13s. for the majority. The printing trade employs a great number; they are restricted to the lower departments, but 'learners' earn 7s., folders, 12s. to 14s., 'prickers' 16s. to 18s. An analysis of 822 in the paper-making trade in Berlin, which is notoriously ill-paid, showed the following result for women in full work :—

Under	5 marks	I
"	5-7	29
"	7-10	172
"	9-12	300
"	12-16	250
"	16-20	69
"	20-22	1

In many industries women work to exhaustion for four marks a week, in numberless cases the wages do not suffice to satisfy the most urgent needs of life, and the workers find themselves obliged to starve or to seek supplementary assistance of the least desirable kind. This is the case in the home-trades where the average wage is lower and the deductions greater, while the hours are enormously long, particularly in the home-tailoring trade, sometimes nineteen, for several consecutive days and nights in the fullest part of the season. In this trade wages range from three to fourteen marks a week, and average about seven.

The toys which come over here in such quantities are made by the dirt-cheap sweating of children. A poor tailor at a meeting in Berlin, the other day, said that when he stopped to buy cheap toys for his own little ones he seemed to see the blood of children upon them. In the agricultural districts women engage in employments not suited to their age and sex.

They may be seen dragging small carts in company with dogs. In the north they plough, furrow, and do potato-digging and hand-thrashing. In no country in Europe are so many women employed in out-door labour.

Working women above all, in Germany have risen to agitate for a change in their own condition. In the worst-paid class we find them resisting. They have the wit to see the evils of factory work done in the homes. It is refreshing to find that, starved down and sweated as they are, they perceive that the system of home work means imprisonment, reductions, the cheating and grinding of middlemen, loss of time, and irregularity of employment. The women employed in the great industry of making jackets for the English and American markets have struck for workshops. One poor home worker was found, living alone, old, ill, treated rudely by the managers of wholesale clothing shops on which she depended for her starvation wages, but declaring that with her last breath she would urge women to struggle for reforms, workshops, and better pay. The principle of the *Klassenkampf* forbids working women to co-operate with the bourgeois class, so that they have thrown in their lot with the Labour Party, and working men, seeing over four millions of women of the proletariat supporting themselves, realise that they are no longer a negligible quantity, and since 1892 they have been allowed to send delegates to the annual congress of Social Democrats. The Social Democratic vote in Germany numbers over two millions, and the party has forty-seven representatives in the Reichstag, and has pledged itself to push the cause of working women till full emancipation is obtained.

It is very difficult for women of the upper and middle classes in Germany to win the confidence of working women, and this can only come slowly as they see that their position excites real interest and sympathy, and that work which is described as magnificent is being done on their behalf by ladies who have acquired personal experience of their trades, have issued schedules and collected statistics and are able to write of industries and to lecture on the shortcomings of Factory Acts with an accurate grasp of detail. Reformers outside the working classes find that it is more judicious not to join the Social Democrats; by so doing they lose their position in society and all influence with women of their own class. If they become Socialists they are no longer listened to when they

speak or write, so that they can do more by working and agitating in their own class.

The woman movement cannot at present be said to be strong or well organised. The restrictions imposed make it very hard to carry on meetings, and magistrates and police are particularly active in closing those got up by women. The law dissolves the associations they try to form for political objects. Men's political associations may not have women members nor may these be present at the meetings of such associations except in Saxony. Deputations of women are refused a hearing by the Government and their petitions are thrown into the waste-paper basket. Yet in June, 1894, a woman has at length been allowed to read a paper on the position of her sex at a congress at Erfurt. The question has come up before the Reichstag which has recently discussed the claims of women to equal rights with men, when one of the leading men, formerly a reactionary, declared that if Germany wished to be at the head of nations she must put her women in a better position, for the position of her women was the measure of a nation's progress. That such a proposition should have commanded serious attention is sufficient proof that the question is alive and that new blood is flowing through Germany to-day. With her intellectual capacity, her practical capability, and her power of work the German woman has it in her to become a great force, as the movement spreads more widely and as her people realise that 'for a nation to be free it is sufficient that she will it.'

EVELYN MARCH PHILLIPPS.

A PAIR OF OLD ENEMIES.

ANNABEL sat by her window, tears in her eyes, and open before her 'The Young Gentlewoman's Complete Aid to Polite Letter-writing.'

It belonged to Aunt Annabel ; by its aid not Aunt Annabel only, but Aunt Annabel's mother and grandmother, had conducted their correspondence ; it was Aunt Annabel who had handed the infallible volume to her niece as she sternly dismissed her to her own room.

A scented breeze strayed in through the open window, and the last rays lay golden and hazy over the sloping meadow, and the tangled wilderness of garden, and the blue sea beyond.

Annabel had sat for an hour, a new pen poised over a sheet of her aunt's best notepaper, while she read over and over again the models recommended to the Young Gentlewoman.

'SIR :

'Sensible as I am of the Honour which you do me in Preferring a Request for my Hand, and grieved as I cannot but feel should my Answer cause you Pain ; Duty, as well as Regard for your Happiness compels me to decline your Flattering Offer, for believe me, Sir, that without Affection Marriage can be profitable neither to the one nor the other.

'Assuring you of my Esteem,

'I remain, Sir,

'Your Obligated Servant,

'_____,

'Miss A., having received Captain B.'s Intimation, hastens to say, in Reply, that her Surprise at Captain's B.'s Presumption is only equalled by her Dislike of Captain B.'s Person.'

Annabel sighed, and pushing back her rebellious hair dipped her pen in the ink and began—

'DEAR MR. HAVERELL——'

The mischievous breeze whisked over a page or two and left the book open at 'To Accept a Proposal of Marriage,' but Annabel only turned back again, and went on heroically—

'The Kindness of which you have given me such gratifying Proof Tempts me to hope for your Forbearance also when I tell you that Circumstances which I am not permitted to explain make it impossible for me to receive your Addresses.

'I must pray you to accept this Decision as final, and consider our Intercourse at an End.

'Yours Obediently,

'ANNABEL DUSCOMBE.'

Had they any feelings, she wondered, those past generations of young ladyhood? Defying propriety, she added in rather a shaky hand—

'P.S.—Please forgive me. If I had known I would not have given you the daffodils' and went downstairs.

She met her aunt at the door of the dairy, for Miss Duscombe managed all the mysteries of milk and cream herself, and silently handed her the letter.

Aunt Annabel read it with a grim smile.

'That will do,' she said; 'now take a fresh sheet and rewrite it, omitting the postscript.'

Poor little Annabel turned to go, but halfway upstairs she faced round on her aunt with a sudden burst of tears and temper.

'Yes, I'll write it, but I'll never forget—*never!*'

'Possibly not,' said Miss Duscombe drily. 'We are not a family that easily forgets—or forgives.'

Miss Duscombe went to the parlour and unlocked a secret drawer in her desk. Out of it she took a packet of old letters.

'I thought I had heard the end of this affair thirty years ago,' she said severely. 'It seems I was mistaken. However, there shall be no more of it,' and she burnt the poor old love-letters, unopened, with as much energy as if they were responsible for the contrariness of things.

And when the last was burnt she began to wonder what was in them; they had lain in her desk untouched for thirty years: she had half wished she had re-read them before she threw

them away. Then she pulled herself up sharply. 'Their behaviour was inexcusable,' she said. 'I need no letters to remind me of that; and doubtless the son is like his father. I will have no more of them.'

Yet this resolve was not altogether easy to keep. Old recollections once waked take a long time to put to sleep again, and Miss Duscombe found herself going through the incidents of that old quarrel with as keen a relish as ever for its spicy details. For indeed the falling out of the Duscombes and the Haverells had been the choicest scandal of the neighbourhood thirty years ago, and Miss Duscombe was justly proud of the fact.

The Haverells had long since left the place, but one of the younger generation, only son of the writer of those old letters, had spent a month lately with friends who lived five miles away from the farm.

And here came in the part of the story which gave Miss Duscombe less pleasure to remember, for it was in the daffodil time, and Claud Haverell had met the young Annabel in the silvery, half-awakened woods, with a great bunch of daffodils in her hand.

Captain Haverell stood on the hearthrug facing his son.

His face, browned by forty years and more of salt sea winds, was of a more coppery shade than usual, and his eyes flashed angrily.

'Of course I never expected you to consider my wishes; I merely stated them, and I repeat that if you choose to be a fool I shall not interfere.'

'At least I have a right to know your reasons,' Claud broke in. 'You have never seen Miss Duscombe; what have you against her?'

'No, I have never seen her. Nor do I wish to. And I beg to deny your right to know my reasons.'

'Miss Duscombe is as worthy in every way to——'

'Oblige me by dropping the subject. Since you choose to marry contrary to my wishes, by all means do so. I need not, of course, remind you that I shall cease to recognise you as my heir.'

'I have told you already,' his son retorted somewhat bitterly, 'that the lady has refused me.'

'Which you take, no doubt, as direct encouragement. However, it is no affair of mine.'

Claud left the room, and strode across the sloping lawn. Captain Haverell, concealed behind the window-curtain, watched him till he was out of sight among the trees. The flash had gone from his eyes now, and the wrathful redness from his cheeks, and under his big grey moustache he smiled to himself.

'Bless the boy,' he said, 'there's no want of Haverell fight in him. As for marrying Miss Marchant—by George, I wouldn't do it myself if she was fifty times an earl's niece! If Annabel Duscombe is anything like her aunt she'll break him in, though.'

Captain Haverell used the future tense with calm unconsciousness of the late scene with his son; for he had not the smallest intention of permanently thwarting any plan which Claud had really at heart, but he meant to find out whether or no it was a mere whim. The fact of the young lady's refusal appeared a trifle; how could any one withstand Claud?

But when he was convinced that the matter was serious earnest, another question arose and haunted him: how could any one be worthy of Claud?

He had forgotten more than Miss Duscombe of that old quarrel; much had happened since then: he had married, in spite of that packet of love-letters, a lady who brought him considerable property; she had died, and his whole interest had centred in Claud; but the name wakened old memories with him as with Aunt Annabel.

Under a somewhat alarming exterior the old sailor kept a very tender heart, and whether it was love for his son, or a sneaking, sentimental sympathy for the writer of that not very convincing letter of rejection, or simply an impartial desire to see what the girl was like, at any rate Captain Haverell betook himself into Devonshire, and invented business which would keep him some days in the neighbourhood of the farm.

It was early August. As Captain Haverell descended the steep, narrow lane that wound to the farm, the overarching tangle of rose and hazel and traveller's joy framed picture after picture of sky and sea, and blue, distant headland.

He walked with much dignity up the garden path between the rose-bushes and the great clumps of lad's-love and lavender (how the scent of it all reminded him of the last time he had

come there, thirty years ago !), and was shown into the stiff, old-fashioned drawing-room.

The captain, to tell the truth, was more than a little nervous at the thought of his interview with Miss Duscombe (for he had not dared to ask for Annabel). His excuses for coming seemed shaky, and indeed he was not very sure himself what they were.

The door opened and Miss Duscombe entered.

For an instant the two looked sharply at each other, then the lady bowed, coldly and majestically, and the gentleman returned it, magnificently.

'Business having brought me into your neighbourhood, madam, I have ventured to take this opportunity of paying my respects,' said the captain, and to himself : 'By George, she hasn't altered ! It would be like her old spirit to order me out of the house !'

And the lady, to herself, said : 'If you think I am blind enough, Philip Haverell, to believe *that* nonsense, you are much mistaken. You have come to look at that girl—and you think you will see her !'

But aloud she only said stiffly, 'I thank you ;' and for half an hour their conversation might have been put bodily into a 'Young Gentlewoman's Complete Aid,' or split up into headings for a copy-book.

The captain rose to go, as far as ever from attaining his end, yet not daring, in the face of that rigid formality, to stay longer.

Miss Duscombe accompanied him to the gate with chilly courtesy. But at the gate he lingered.

'I hope, madam, before I leave, I may be permitted to repeat a visit which has afforded me much pleasure ?' said he.

'Seeing that you have not been here for thirty years, you will excuse my surprise at your request,' said Miss Duscombe sharply.

'Long absence, madam, enhances the pleasure of meeting,' he replied, with a gallant bow.

But Miss Duscombe's temper had stood as much as it meant to stand for one afternoon.

'Pray don't try to make me suppose you came here for the pleasure of meeting me,' she said. 'You wished to see my niece ; allow me to tell you she is in no danger of forming an alliance with your family.'

This blunt statement of his object startled Captain Haverell, made him, in fact, quite unreasonably angry.

'Pardon my intrusion,' he said furiously. 'I thought it possible years might have lessened your natural desire for revenge. I was wrong.'

'That is a gratuitous insult,' retorted Miss Duscombe.

'I beg to think your imputation equally gratuitous.'

'If you refer to what I take to be the motive of your visit, I have no hesitation in repeating it,' said Miss Duscombe.

'Allow me to compliment you on your shrewdness,' madam.'

'Your excuse of "business" was hardly in the nature of a compliment to my shrewdness,' she returned; 'since your mission has failed, I suppose "business" will not detain you longer in the neighbourhood.'

'No, madam, it will not,' and with a sweeping bow the captain strode away, head erect and back as straight as a board; he scarcely slackened speed until he reached the inn two miles away; and had packed his portmanteau and ordered a carriage to take him to the station next morning before he cooled down.

Then he began to reflect on his afternoon's adventures. 'By George,' he repeated, 'she's just the same as ever! Give me a woman who knows how to quarrel, and——' he caught himself up in a hurry. 'A fiend of a temper—upon my word that woman's husband would have a terrible time of it! A terrible time!' he repeated emphatically, and yet he was bound to admit that his visit had been in the highest degree exhilarating.

He was conscious of a lurking desire to see Miss Duscombe again, if only for the pleasure of quarrelling with her, and when, later, excitement was succeeded by weariness, he grew just a little dismal. It had been so pleasant to see the old place again and smell the familiar scents; and finally he had himself driven to the head of the lane, and followed it a second time to the gate of the farm.

This time he was thinking neither of Claud nor Annabel, his sole intention was to steal some of Miss Duscombe's lad's-love; and Miss Duscombe, who was picking grubs off the roses, took care that he should be fairly committed to the theft before she pounced upon him.

'Your conduct this afternoon, Captain Haverell,' said she,

with a mock curtsy, 'hardly led me to expect this further honour.'

'There is an irresistible charm about old memories, my dear madam, even when recalled by nothing better than a quarrel,' said he.

'And so you have returned to quarrel with me again?'

'If there is no other way of seeing you, yes.' Captain Haverell spoke with a sudden seriousness that made Miss Duscombe snatch a sharp glance at him before taking her turn in the game.

'Then I would like to know what you mean by robbing my garden, sir?'

The captain fidgeted with a rose-spray.

'Am I to understand,' pursued Miss Duscombe, unrelenting, 'that the case is undefended?'

'I can only throw myself on your mercy, madam.'

'You will allow me to think you a trifle rash,' observed the lady drily. "'Years have not lessened my natural desire for revenge"——'

But by this time Captain Haverell was fully aware that he wanted a great deal more than the lad's-love. He grew desperate.

'Annabel!' he exclaimed.

'Don't speak like that!' she cried, so sharply that he was startled; '*you* may play with your old memories—you men: will you never learn that your plaything may be all the life a woman has?'

She recovered herself and apologised stiffly for her outburst.

'We are hardly to be congratulated on our performance,' she remarked; 'suppose we ring down the curtain. Good-night'; but there was a bitterness in her voice that had not been there before, and she extended an ungracious hand.

Nevertheless he caught it and pleaded his best; and not in vain. In five minutes he had got to both hands and, 'Annabel—is it possible you are willing to overlook thirty years of folly, and accept the scanty remains of my lifelong devotion?'

She looked him straight in the eyes with a mischievous smile.

'You are prepared,' she said, 'to risk the consequences?'

The captain came, not through the gate, but over it, for it was very low, and the rose-bushes were scandalised at his

conduct ; but the old gnarled apple-trees were not, for they had seen it all before.

Two days later, Captain Haverell, waiting alone in the parlour, chanced upon the 'Aid to Polite Letter-writing.'

He had had so many affairs of his own to think about that the young couple in whose interests he had come had been very much neglected.

He chuckled as he turned the pages, and read the model of the very letter that had made all the mischief. Then he picked up a pencil, and added an appendix to the famous volume :—

'LETTER FROM A YOUNG LADY TO AN ACCEPTED SUITOR.

'MY DEAR CLAUD,—The news I have got for you cannot travel by letter, but I will try to tell it you, if you are curious to know what it is, in the wood where the daffodils grew last spring.

'Come there the day after to-morrow ; if you are later than that I will tell you nothing, and if you have forgotten the way you need not come at all.

'ANNABEL.'

This done, and the book smuggled into Annabel's bedroom, Captain Haverell complacently awaited the result.

His patience was not greatly tried. He was just leaving the house that afternoon when he came upon Annabel, trying to look as if she were not waiting for him, behind a big rose-bush.

Her eyes were dreamily bright ; her cheeks grew pinker than the pinkest of the roses as she looked up at the captain.

'Well ?' said he. **'What crime are we going to confess now, I wonder ?'**

'Have you confessed to Aunt Annabel how you have been taking liberties with her books ?' she demanded.

He coughed elaborately. **'Ahem—I think, my dear, we need not trouble your aunt with that little matter. May I have the pleasure of posting your letter ?'**

'What letter ?'

'Have you not made use of the appendix ?—No ? Dear, dear, I fear I have been making a grave mistake ! But I am

writing to Claud to-night ; I will mention, of course, that you see no reason to change your——'

'Oh,' cried Annabel, 'how *tiresome* you are ! Of course I wasn't going to write, till——'

'Then I may tell him to try again ?'

'Tell him—anything you like,' said she.

HELEN OUSTON.

A WOODEN CHANTICLEER.

BY HON. MRS. W. F. MAITLAND, AUTHOR OF 'THE CROWN
PITIFUL, ETC.

CHAPTER I.

'One misty moisty morning
When cloudy was the weather,
Then I met an old man
Clothed all in leather.

Oh, how d'ye do? Oh, how d'ye do?
Oh, how d'ye do again?'

Old Song.

THE rain was falling in volumes, transforming the narrow, irregular pavement (where pavement existed) of the precipitous streets of the little mountain town of G—— into polished red marble for the nonce.

Miniature torrents rushed down the gutters, and beside them ran or rather rushed, too, a little boy—to judge by his pace he was trying to emulate the velocity of the streams. Moist clouds enveloped the peaks of the mountains, and now and again, through the foggy air, the bell of a chapel higher up chimed forth. The good sisters who lived close by it had dismissed their little school of poor children preparatory to the service, and the boy, one of their flock, had but just bid them good-night. He reached a small natural platform, as it were, in the town where in dry weather a really fine view could be obtained over the terrace-like stone balustrading edging the side looking down the valley. At present it was lost in clouds.

This flat place was a favourite resort of the old people in summer, who sat basking in the sun, when it was not too hot to do so, the men smoking and the women chattering the latest gossip in their shrill voices. And on washing-days the trough hard by would be surrounded with busy younger women, washing away as if life depended upon it, and beating the clothes they were employed on with smooth pieces of wood, as if destruction rather than cleansing was their intention. All

was silent now on this platform, and as Claud reached it he paused to take breath.

He was tall for his age, eight or thereabouts, and built sturdily, too, with broad shoulders. He wore a little woollen suit of brown, manufactured for him by his mother, and a scarlet knitted cap covered his head, dark chestnut copper-tinted curls escaped round the edge of it, and a pair of most wonderful brown eyes shone at you and made you always forget if the face was slightly sallow or not, for they were of rare beauty with their long dark lashes and winning expression. The boy only paused for an instant, the next he was dashing down another steep street that turned abruptly to the right and where his headlong career ceased at the door of a little house at the base of the street. Apparently by the bright, animated look of the boy's face, the weather had no power to damp his spirits, though it had most surely and thoroughly everything else that he possessed. The door he had now reached belonged to a small shop, and as Claud pulled it open hastily it disclosed a room encumbered with a variety of every kind of furniture that could be made, all more or less broken, for le père Joseph, as the owner of the shop was always called, was renowned as a repairer or improver of anything that was fortunate enough to pass through his hands. He had become so celebrated for this that people came from far as well as near to have their old goods made equal to or indeed in some cases better than new. The old man, as Claud came into the room, was seated on a high stool, with an ancient coffee-pot in one hand; with the other he was filling up a hole in its side with a small instrument with which he inserted some metal he had melted. He did not turn his head as Claud approached him, but went on steadily with his work. The child watched him intently and silently, and it was only by the steaming of his wet garments, caused by the little stove over which the metal was bubbling that le père Joseph at length became aware of his presence.

He immediately laid down his work, and turning a pair of shrewd-looking though kindly eyes on the boy, said, 'My son, you should be at home—so wet—go at once, you will be ill.'

'Very well,' said Claud, turning to depart; 'only I came to ask if the monkey is going to be what you wish, and I didn't like to interrupt you.'

'Yes, yes,' answered the old man, 'the monkey is very well,

I think, but you shall see,' and pointing to a cupboard near at hand he bade Claud draw forth from thence a piece of white wood and a sharp knife that lay beside it, and taking it from the boy he showed him how the monkey was growing—growing under his clever hands. Le père Joseph was never idle, and in his spare moments he carved out the most wonderful wooden toys. It was this talent of his that had first attracted Claud, who in returning from school had learnt to loiter at the old man's window, where in fine weather it was to be found open with some bright piece of striped stuff stretched as an awning over it, to keep off the full power of the sun from the Père Joseph's eyes as he sat under it on his high seat, busily employed at his useful work. The shop lay on the way to Claud's home where his widowed mother lived, and at this time she had become accustomed to her little boy spending a short time with his friend instead of returning to her at once, when he was released by the good sisters who taught him and some other poor children, and looked after the crèche near the chapel. Young Widow Martin had not lived many years at G——. She had come there soon after she had been made a widow, with Claud then a baby, and the little town seemed to suit her, so she had remained. She made no friends except with the sisters, and she had been a puzzle to her neighbours, the lively Jeannettes, Maries, and Suzannes, who would have pestered her with questions if she had not kept herself aloof from them, and so had been stigmatised proud and cold, and had finally been left alone to her self-chosen retired life. Little Claud's horizon was bounded by the mountains around them—he knew of no other place, and he could not remember arriving at G—— with his mother.

One of his earliest memories was of being allowed to return alone home without, as had been the custom, his mother fetching him from the sisters; and then of having first observed old Joseph fashioning a ship, without knowing even what it meant, and he had seen its daily progress, and had watched so earnestly that at length the old man had learnt to notice him and to nod, and soon, indeed, to watch for his coming. Some of Claud's school comrades would look in when passing occasionally, but they would soon tire and run on again, leaving Claud gazing with his heart in his wistful brown eyes, as père Joseph's skilful fingers began or finished a carved toy. It was generally at the time of day that Claud passed

that the old man allowed himself a short while at this particular work, otherwise he was usually employed in mending, but the child liked to watch le père Joseph even at this, his fingers were so skilful in all they undertook. Had Claud been to any fairs he would have known that white wooden toys are common, but le père Joseph's toys as far excelled the ordinary wooden toy in ingenuity of movement as they did in form.

Take his monkeys climbing sticks, for instance. His gave an extra turn in climbing or descending the stick, or their tails waved about unlike the ordinary monkeys. Then the wooden ships on wheels had soldiers too posted on them, but such soldiers! and when the ship was drawn along some clever arrangement of the string made them raise their muskets and even fire off peas. And a flock of sheep on wheels, when moved, would shake their heads, and the shepherd boy driving them would lift his crook from his shoulder and replace it again. There was an individuality in all le père Joseph's toys—his women carrying goods to market had quite characters of their own, and all had a different expression on their wooden faces, and so had the farmers coming out of queer-looking houses.

No one, to watch the old man's attitude at work, would have guessed that he was a cripple, but so, alas! it was, and it was only with difficulty he could move about. A serious accident had been the cause of this in his youth, when in better circumstances, but his cheerfulness was unfailing, and he would say reverently, if a pitying eye gazed at him, 'Le bon Dieu had given him this work and it was an ever increasing delight to him.'

CHAPTER II.

'This is the cock that crowed in the morn.'—*Old Rhyme.*

'WHAT art thou doing, Claud? 'tis time thou wert at school.' These words were addressed to the boy by his mother one day some weeks after he had been running in the rain.

'I was but trying, my mother, to look at the wooden toy thou didst show me along ago, that once was so admirable—do but let me see it close again.' And Claud, who was standing on tip-toe on a chair by a shelf that was fixed on the wall

of the kitchen, and which was too high for him to see properly the objects that were on it, turned a beseeching look on his mother.

'It is late and I cannot let thee wait any longer,' she replied. 'Go now, and when thou returnest and can repeat a piece that thou hast been taught to-day really well, then I will show thee what thou askest for ; but remember it is not to be played with, it is too precious for that.' With this answer Claud had to be content, and clambering down he was soon speeding his way upwards to school.

The toy he was so anxious to see again had been shown him a long while before by his mother, years before in fact. It was a cock carved in white wood, and it was very natural in shape. Before it had been broken his mother had told him it could open its beak and crow and at the same time flap its wings. But for many a long year it had been unable to do this, and Claud had not been allowed to take it in his hands. It is possible the knowledge of how much his mother prized this toy had increased the interest he felt in Père Joseph's work, and this morning, though he could not think why, he had risen with a longing to look at the cock more closely—oh, if he could only persuade his mother to let him carry it to show his friend !—and he wondered in an idle manner as he mounted the steep streets why his mother valued it so highly.

He remembered when he first saw the toy : his mother had taken it out of a box where she kept things that were precious to her. And she had carefully replaced it in the box after he had seen it, and he had noticed her eyes were moist as she had returned the box to the shelf where it always was kept. Since awakening that morning the wish to see it again had been in his mind ; for one thing he had never seen le père Joseph make such a thing among the many toys he had fashioned with that clever knife of his, and he wanted to observe the difference in this treasure to the work of his friend. Why, if it was so valuable, this cock, Claud felt sure Père Joseph could copy it if he saw it, and then he could sell it for a great deal, for the child believed his friend to be quite poor.

These thoughts had returned during Claud's lessons, and his mind had not in consequence been fixed on his task ; his inattention had even brought on him a gentle reprimand, and then he had recollected that to see the cock he must learn perfectly what his mother was to hear. This recollection made

him attend to his work, and before long to know his lesson well. And on his return from school he was able also to repeat it perfectly to his mother. And then he was allowed to look at the carved toy again. His mother held it in her hands and showed it him herself.

'See,' she said, 'how like a real cock it is, and how the feathers are marked so carefully and stand out like real ones, on the wings and tail, and how the hackle ones sit round his neck—it must have been a clever one who made that.

'Ah, my mother, I would you could see le père Joseph's work,' exclaimed Claud, emboldened to make this remark by his mother's admiration of the cock. 'It is beautiful, and I do think he could even make such a toy as this if only, my mother, thou wouldst let me show it to him.'

But Madam Martin would not yield to his entreaties, nor did she believe Père Joseph could make anything like her treasure. She herself never went to see any one, and she would not have thought it possible to relax her rule in order to exhibit the toy to a strange old man whom she knew nothing of beyond what Claud had told her and of whom indeed she felt slightly jealous from the boy's delight in his society. The knowledge of this feeling made her often appear as if cross when Claud descanted to her of le père Joseph's cleverness. For she was a good woman, and she felt angry with herself for her petty feeling. After having looked at the toy very carefully, and having noted its lines so as to be able to give a faithful description of it to his friend, Claud allowed his mother to replace it in the box, which she then put back on the shelf. Then with an effort, for he felt it so, he asked hesitatingly—

'I may not know, my mother, about the cock? nor why you prize it so very much?' The widow Martin seemed surprised at his question, and said coldly as she took up some book—

'Oh, thou mayest know, if indeed thou wishest it; I but waited for thee to ask.' Claud was delighted, and hurried to draw a stool to his mother's feet.

'Tell me now, my mother,' he exclaimed, gazing up, his eyes shining with expectancy. Madame Martin did not begin at once, she sighed once or twice, rose, walked about in an agitated manner, and then resuming her seat she stroked back the hair on the boy's forehead. It was so unusual for her to caress him, that Claud was surprised, and seizing her hand he kissed it, saying—

‘Thou shalt not tell me now, my mother, another time will do indeed.’ But Madame Martin would not agree to this. ‘It was nothing,’ she said, as she tried to hide a tear that had sprung to her eyes. ‘Thou canst not remember thy father, child, I know, and thou dost not know how joyful my life was in my old home. When thou camest it seemed as if the world was too happy a place and that there was nothing more to be desired. The toy belonged to thy father, he valued it greatly too—almost as much as I do—almost, not quite I think. It had been his all his life—all, that is, of his life that he could remember. It was found in his pocket when he was rescued—ah ! thou dost not know, I forgot that. Thy father was saved from drowning when a little lad, such another as thou. The kind man who saved his life took him home with him in his cart to the distant village where he lived, and would not afterwards part with him, and thy father could not tell if he had parents or anything about himself, for he was ill a long time after he was saved, and never afterwards did remember what had happened before his fall into the lake. The doctors said his head had received some injury, and though he grew up tall and strong, he ever treated the old people he lived with as his parents, and they could not have loved him more had he been their own son. Only, whenever he looked upon the wooden toy he grew sad, and felt he knew more than he could tell anybody, and he would try so hard to recollect, that the old people hid the cock away for a long, long while. Well, years went by, and we, who had known each other from children, for I lived with my grandmother in the same village, we married, and lived in a house not far from Pierre’s foster-father. His wife had died. Then my grandmother came to live with us till she passed away at a great age. She was the only living relation I had. After that we spent many happy years, when all prospered, but a terrible fever appeared in our village—’twas when thou wast but a twelvemonth old—and Pierre, thy father, caught it—ah ! that time !’ Claud’s mother leant forward and covered her face for a moment with her disengaged hand. The boy held her other one and gently stroked it, and presently the poor widow spoke again. ‘It is enough to tell thee thy father died of the fever and everything almost had to be destroyed for fear of infection, and I—I could not stay in that place with all its memories, and that is how thou and I came here. I had no one in the world then to care for me, no relations,

and so I could go where I pleased.' Here the poor woman's feelings became too painful as a crowd of recollections passed through her mind of her loneliness with her little baby, and her frame shook with suppressed sobs, whilst Claud, who had never seen his cold, calm mother weep outright, threw his arms round her and tried to comfort her with childish endearments.

CHAPTER III.

'The king becoming graces, devotion, patience, courage, fortitude.

Shakespeare

THE next day Claud was full of the thought of describing his father's toy to le père Joseph. It seemed a day when everything happened as it should. The weather was so lovely and sunshiny, and Claud sang snatches of little songs (he felt so lighthearted) as he mounted his way to school. His lessons were all well done when there, and he was praised for his careful writing. He recited a piece he had learnt to M. le Curé, who had looked in to see the children in the school, and he received a pat on the head and was allowed to search in the good priest's ample pockets for sweets, of which there was ever an unfailing store for children who tried to do well. Claud's feet had never taken him more swiftly to le père Joseph than they did that day on his way home. His heart was full of the pleasure he was to give the old man, and he little expected the disappointment he was to receive. Le père Joseph, for one thing, was exceedingly busy, for he was trying to finish as quickly as possible some repairing which had long been due. And for a little while he could not spare the time to reply to Claud's greetings with which the boy prefaced his eager—

'Oh, Mr. Joseph, I have wanted so to ask you often why you never carve cocks amongst the many birds and animals that you make. We have such a wonderful one,' and he tried to describe as exactly as he could the wooden treasure.

'How knowest thou that I have never carved such a bird?' The old man's voice sounded harsh, and he put down his work suddenly and turned his eyes on the child with a strange glitter in them. 'How knowest thou that, I say?'

'Thy pardon, Mr. Joseph, I but thought it, because I have never seen such a thing among thy works.'

'Thou hast never seen such a cock as I *have* carved,' answered the old man excitedly, 'and what is more thou never wilt, for I have promised myself I will never make such another.' And the old man seized his work again only to drop it as suddenly at the sound of a low sob behind him, for Claud was weeping bitterly. Poor little fellow! he was so much disappointed, and surprised too, at Père Joseph's almost angry replies. It had all been for nothing, then—his thoughts of his old friend's pleasure in making such a thing, and he turned to go. But le père Joseph put his hand on his shoulder.

'Cry not, child, like that,' he said; 'I meant not to hurt thy feelings. If thou wilt bring this toy to show me, I may perhaps tell thee of another one.'

'Ah, I only wish I might,' burst out Claud, 'but my mother will not let it out of her hands.'

'What, thy mother values it so highly, then—'tis a work of art?' and there was a cynical sound in the tone of Père Joseph's voice.

'It *is* beautiful,' answered Claud, 'but it is not for that—it is because it was my father's when a little boy.'

'Thy father's when a little boy,' repeated the old man, in an abstracted manner, and then, as if rousing himself suddenly from thinking, he added, 'It is strange; but oh, I mustn't waste time, I must finish my work. Go, child, go now,' and he almost pushed Claud in the direction of the door. The boy obeyed, and was closing it after him when he heard le père Joseph calling him back, and hurriedly reopening it he found his friend had again laid down his work and was beckoning to him to approach. As the child did so the old man placed his hand on his head, forcing it back that he might study his face; then, as he bent his head over him, a tear splashed on the boy's upturned countenance. Another instant and Père Joseph had turned again to his work, whilst he said gruffly, 'Goodbye; now I must finish what I have to do to-night.'

As Claud ran home he thought to himself, 'Tis a strange toy, and seems to make every one shed tears who sees or hears about it. My mother wept and Mr. Joseph too, I know, and I too have been crying.' When he fell asleep

that night he had strange, distorted dreams of the old man, his mother, and the wooden cock. He did not know how much he had called out and had talked in his sleep about his wish to take it to show to le père Joseph, nor that his mother had risen and had come twice to his side and had heard what he said, and that her heart had been melted by his words. So he was very much surprised at breakfast when Madame Martin suddenly remarked that she had been reflecting over her refusal to allow the cock to be taken to show Mr. Joseph, and she thought now that perhaps she had not been right, and that therefore this very day, if he liked, he might on his return from the sisters take the toy to le père Joseph's residence. She was not prepared for the torrent of thanks that poured from Claud's lips, nor for the wild embrace that followed it.

'Have a care, child,' she said, stroking her spotless apron and cuffs, 'thou wilt make me very untidy.' But nevertheless she allowed herself to be embraced again on Claud's departure for school, his eyes beaming with happiness. Alas sometimes for human hopes—for the boy, as he came skipping along that day homewards, jumping, as was his wont over every little gutter that came in his way, and over which he must have jumped many hundred times in safety before in his life, fell at one place, and on trying to rise found he had twisted his foot badly, and it was as much as he could do to get home at all, he was in so much pain, and the hope of visiting Père Joseph had to be given up.

The twist, sprain, or whatever it was, did not mend quickly. It was quite a fortnight before Claud was able to walk about again, and then he was still lame. That fortnight seemed to the boy more like a year, but he strove bravely with his impatience so as not to worry his mother, though at times he found it very difficult. She was quite aware of this, and admired his efforts to control all repining remarks, for patience and fortitude were the virtues she thought the most of, and as soon as ever Claud could use his foot sufficiently to mount the stairs and to roam about the small house, she declared he should take the cock the very next day to his old friend. Claud quite feared when the morrow came that something would prevent his wish taking place, but the morning proved fine, and at midday his mother settled he should start for Père Joseph's cottage, and she said as she placed the wooden cock carefully in the child's two hands—

'Thou hast been a good, patient boy, and I am pleased that thou wilt now have thy wish, for it is a kind one, to give pleasure to the poor old man, and remember I trust to thee to bring me back the toy safely.'

The look alone in Claud's eyes was answer enough. And he set out walking carefully, still slightly lame, and terribly afraid of slipping with the precious cock in his arms. Before he reached his destination his foot ached a good deal, and he had never before noticed that it was quite a distance from his home, and he was very glad indeed, for his foot's sake alone, when le père Joseph's little shop window came in sight. But what could be the matter?—the awning, though the sun shone brightly, was not to be seen, and the blind in the window was drawn down closely. Never had Claud seen Père Joseph's window like that before. What could be the reason? A strange fear set the child's heart beating wildly. He had seen windows like that before, with all the blinds down, when the day was as far on as it was now.

(To be continued.)

MEMORABLE MEALS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'JOINED TO AN IDOL,' 'SITTING STILL IN THE HOUSE,' ETC., ETC.

FROM the earliest times of which we have any knowledge, men have desired to eat together in company, and, to surround, with varying forms and ceremonies, the process of feeding. So ingrained is the habit that we have come to regard eating in solitude as either a sign of the sternest asceticism, or as one of the most painful and degrading forms of punishment. All down the ages, hospitality has expressed itself, not merely, indeed not chiefly, in giving shelter, but in giving food ; and, from the beginning of what we call Time—coeval with the nebulous dawn of the civilisation that now casts an almost too lurid glare—has this same hospitality been held to be a virtue, more or less exalted, according to the motive which actuates it ; also, it is a virtue not confined to the civilised nations : it is one shared in by every tribe of those peoples whom we are wont to call savage—nay, it is occasionally shown by the nobler orders of the brute creation. Well does the writer remember the charming pleasure of seeing a little dog of the Isle of Skye breed, to which (after a large luncheon party in his owner's house) had been given a sumptuous supply of bones of game and poultry, go out into the street and return with several dog friends that he took up to the dish, and invited to partake of his unusual abundance. Memory also recalls an instance of daintier food-giving, combined with the tender maternal instinct common to birds. It was in the fair, eucalyptus-shadowed garden of the 'Tre Fontana,' some years ago, when the then Prior of that Trappist monastery loved to gather around him various kinds of birds, and cats of beautiful form and colour. Amongst the former were a peacock and his hen. To her we gave some pieces of biscuit ; at the moment, she was alone, but, raising her pretty, graceful head, she gave a quick little cry, and forthwith fluttered up from under sheltering shrubs, a number of her own baby chicks, and those of two beautiful snow-white hens, and for

all alike she broke up the pieces of biscuit into tiny morsels, eagerly seized upon by her hungry little guests. The poetry of hospitality could not much farther go.

Because material food is essential to bodily life it has pleased Almighty God to use it as a symbol of the spiritual nourishment of the soul. In the Catholic Church the sacramental mystery of the Lord's Supper has been ever preserved and transmitted; and in every denomination of Christians, it is held essential to set forth a solemn banquet, to be taken together in grave companionship, with more or less of accompanying ceremonial, as a sign and seal of membership one with another.

This highest use of food we have not now to dwell upon. One wishes to recall some few of the many social and ceremonial meals which have become historical, because of the unusual events that happened in connection with them. Later on, one would glance at some personally memorable, which also, because of unusual adjuncts, may not be devoid of general interest.

In one of the earliest historical writings—the Bible—we find numerous 'memorable meals,' so many indeed that only a small selection can be made. The one spread for Abraham by that mysterious personage, Melchisedec, is of too sacred a nature to be more than named; and, likewise, one cannot dwell upon the wondrous eating and drinking of the three heavenly visitants at the door of that great patriarch's tent, picturesquely beautiful though it be to the imagination. Who can forget those two meals, memorable for all time, which took place in the family of Abraham's son, the patriarch Isaac? Neither of them is creditable to their dispensers, in one case we cannot say *givers*, for the mess of 'red pottage' and the bread were *sold* by Jacob at a price (out of all count exceeding their worth) to the wearied huntsman, his own brother Esau. Few and terse are the words describing the scene of that meal, in which seller and buyer were alike guilty, and yet how vividly all the details present themselves to the mind's eye! as also do those of the later one, begun and prepared and eaten in deception. It is the more minutely described of the two. We can hear the aged, blind Isaac asking his firstborn to go a-hunting, and then dress the meats of his spoil so that he might eat thereof and bless him solemnly before he should die. It was to be a meal of a

ceremonial and religious character, and well indeed did Rebekah and Jacob understand its signification and importance. We are told the details of the deception practised upon the blind old Isaac by Rebekah in order to obtain the blessing of the firstborn for her younger son, who only too willingly carried out her crafty counsel. Seldom, if ever, has there been so strange a banquet. False meats—for they were not what they were supposed to be—offered by false, because disguised, hands, and accompanied by false vows to a blind man, and that man not an enemy, not a passing stranger, but a loving father !

Pleasanter in most of its characteristics, though not without its touches of pathetic pain, was the banquet in which Jacob's sons took part in a palace of an Egyptian king, eleven of those sons quite unaware that they were being entertained by the twelfth, the brother whom they had ill-treated and sold, long years before, into a captivity which they probably thought had soon ended in death.

To every mind will recur the first Passover feast, eaten in haste, with girded loins and sandalled feet, in dread silent waiting for the 'passing of the Lord,' after which arose 'a great cry in Egypt, an exceeding bitter cry, for there was not a house wherein there lay not one dead.' And, again, the first partaking of the miraculously sent 'manna' must have been 'a memorable meal' to the Israelites.

Miraculous and truly picturesque giving of food was twice vouchsafed to Elijah the Tishbite ; first, by the ministration of ravens who brought him bread and flesh at morning and at night ; and secondly, by an angel giving him a cake of flour and water. Who does not recall the sumptuous meal spread by Queen Esther for her husband the king, and for the treacherous-hearted Aman, or Hamon, with all its far-reaching consequences ; and also, that in which Judith sat by the side of Holofernes when the latter became 'exceedingly drunk' ? Down through the ages, the burning glare of 'Belshazzar's Feast' has not yet died out. In many hearts still echo the solemn words, throbbing and pulsing like the Dead March notes on muffled drums—the words written by the ghostly fingers that came from no human arm—

'Weighed in the balance,
And found wanting.'

In the books of the holy Gospels (besides the highest and holiest of all feasts that earth has ever known, or will know, until time shall be no more) three stand out with special prominence; and, save that all-holiest, none has ever been more frequently represented in art; nor, more often named in sermon and in poem. The first, 'the marriage in Cana of Galilee,' seems bathed in radiant light, and to have been one of the few earthly rejoicings unclouded by sorrow, unspoilt by meannesses and jealousies; and, exempt from any of those untoward accidents that shadow life's happiest hours, leaving in all hearts the unsatisfied longing that is truly the 'touch of the spoiler's hand,' although man's Redeemer, in His infinite goodness, can transmute it into that yearning for Himself and His home, which must, if encouraged and acted upon, be hereafter abundantly '*satisfied*.' Of all the many renderings which art has given us of that gladsome festival, surely the most poetical, the most likely to approach somewhat to the reality, are those of Tintoretto, that painter, whose mind was steeped in poetry, even though he wrote (so far as we are aware) no rhymed lines.

Different in every possible way, in outward details and in inner meaning, from that innocent and happy feast in Cana of Galilee was the banquet at which Salome danced, to please a voluptuous king and to accomplish her mother's desire for the silencing of a too truthful tongue, and the extinction of a noble life. That banquet also, has often been represented in art, by itself; and, in series of paintings on panel, on wall, and on glass, of the picturesque and unique life of St. John the Baptist.

The beauty of every detail of the third in this group of memorable feasts—that spread in the house of Simon the Pharisee—seems to have charmed and entered into the soul of many of the post-Raffaelite artists, for it does not appear to have greatly attracted those of earlier ages. Paolo Cagliari's and Bassano's various renderings will recur to us all; for it was a subject specially dear to the Venetian school of painters, who loved a generous sweep of brush over wide canvasses, and who, regardless of space, brought together, not a few figures, as did the Tuscans and Umbrians, but groups and gatherings of men and women, to walk at large in the rich bravery of attire common amongst the citizens of one of the world's wealthiest republics; and to whom (their riches

coming from the East) scenes of oriental magnificence, steeped in the radiant light of lands of the sun-rising, were peculiarly congenial. But the Venetian masters were not the only artists who realised, in idealising this story. In the Capitoline Picture Gallery in Rome there is a small picture of exquisite daintiness, the execution like that of a missal miniature. It is painted on vellum, and a title-plate tells us that it is a miniature copy by Marie Sublegras of a painting by her husband. To the writer's thinking, there are few more charming presentments of one of the loveliest stories of a woman's penitence and devotion, concerning which the central Figure prophesied that 'wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the world, this also that *she* hath done shall be told for a memorial of her.' If the awful words seen at Belshazzar's feast can be set only to the solemn and massive minims of the 'Dead March in Saul,' these, in their ineffable tenderness, with the pardoning love that is not on the surface, but which we know underlies them, seem to associate themselves in the memory, with the tender, chastened gladness of such melodies as 'He shall Feed His Flock like a Shepherd,' and 'The Lord is Mindful of His Own.'

Can we suppose it possible that any of the multitudes who were fed, without stint, from the five loaves and the two small fishes, ever forgot that miraculous feeding? Surely, no meal chronicled of men had a fairer background of natural scenery or so wondrously generous an entertainer or such attendants. All these accessories of the unexpected relief from the suffering of hunger must have been ever remembered, till life's latest hour, by the guests; and yet, so all too common is 'man's ingratitude,' it is quite possible that some of those 'five thousand' were amongst the maddened crowd that but a short while after cried aloud—'Away with Him!' 'Crucify Him!'

In the vast mass of ecclesiastical legends, are many stories of miraculous, or otherwise memorable meals. Time would fail to glance even at the half of them; but one at least is too lovely to be omitted, not for the story's sake alone, but also, and perhaps chiefly, for its most beautiful embodiment on a wall of the Great Refectory in St. Mark's Convent in Florence. No one who has been either a resident, or a passing visitor, in the fair little 'City of the Lion and the Lily' can fail to recall 'La Providenza,' as

its citizens long ago named it, that, in a silence more eloquent than words, preaches the Gospel of Trust, the Gospel of Hope, which one would fain believe had permeated the soul of its painter, Giovanni Sogliani, or else, surely, he could not have made its lessons *live* in the faces of those white-robed brethren sitting patiently, hope overcoming even hunger, around the board neatly spread with homely appliances for eating and drinking, and yet, with no signs of any food to be partaken of therewith—another reading of the good old proverb, ‘Get the spindle and distaff ready, and God will provide the flax.’ In this case it was, ‘Set out the cup and platter, and God will fill them,’ as surely He did, *the Providence* (literally, the providing of the Father) being exercised for His children in their hour of need. We all know the story—how the young community of Dominicans, not long established by St. Dominick himself in the monastery of San Sisto, had been for several days in absolute need of food, without bread, even, (and at all times they ate little else). St. Dominick sent out two of the brethren to try to obtain some bread from the charitable, and having caused the board to be spread, he and the others sat round it and prayed and waited. Just when the wearied messengers were returning empty-handed, two angels, young and beautiful, with radiant, rainbow-tinted wings and golden hair, descended silently, with less flutter than that of a bird’s downward flight, in front of the board, each bearing a goodly number of loaves. *That* was ‘*the Providence*,’ the moment seized by the artist, who, loving the sweet story, stamped all its sweetness on the different faces of those who witnessed the miracle. Only, *one* very young brother, hollow-eyed and pale with long fasting, gazes with some touch of surprise, tinged perhaps with fear, at the angels. All the other brethren show no wonder, seem no whit afraid, nor even surprised. As might be expected, the holy calm and waiting confidence of all is intensified in the face of the head of the community, the founder, St. Dominick, who, sitting in the centre of his brethren, lifts his hands and eyes to heaven, thanking, not the messengers, heavenly visitants though they be, but their Sender, the Almighty God, in Whom he and his children have been putting their trust. That was indeed a memorable meal, never to be overlooked by any one who has looked at this, its thrice lovely portrayal.

Passing now from Bible lore and monastic legends to secular

history, many a noteworthy banquet is brought to our memory. Not all of them are pleasant in their associations, indeed few are so, most of them being connected with treachery and cruelty. One of a pleasant nature recurs to the memory—the sumptuous banquet which good Sir Richard Whittington spread for the young and popular King Henry the Fifth, ‘Madcap Harry.’ It was in the second or third mayoralty of the good old merchant prince, and a huge fire built of costly and sweet-smelling woods burnt on the open hearth of the Guildhall banqueting-room. Sir Richard made it costlier still, for he threw into its midst the I.O.U. of the king for large sums which he had *lent*, and now generously *gave* to the sovereign whom no one could help loving for his own open-handed generosity, his gay good-humour, his warm, impulsive manner, and his intrepid bravery.

In contrast to this meal, memorable for the kindness of the giver and the honest gratitude of the recipient, let us picture to ourselves two which took place in Edinburgh Castle and one in Holyrood Palace. It was when Alexander Crichton was governor of the, even then, *old* castle crowning lofty Dun-Edin; and also guardian of the murdered poet-king’s eldest son, the youthful sovereign of Scotland, under the style and title of James the Second. The poor boy, who had been once rescued from his clutches by the wily stratagem of his mother, ‘God Cupid’s own Princess,’ had again fallen into them by the ‘will of the Lords of Scotland.’ A dreary life the boy led in that eagle’s eyrie of a home, and under the harsh rule of one of the most unamiable and disagreeable men of the time, which is doubtless saying a good deal! Leading such a dreary life, the young king hailed with delight the sudden and by him quite unexpected arrival of two lads of high degree, none higher, save himself, in the land, for they were William and David Douglas, descendants of the good Lord James. Too probably, the lads themselves were not so well pleased at finding themselves in the castle, as the king was to have them, for the manner in which they had been inveigled into the fortress must have aroused their suspicions, which were doubtless heightened into fear by the peremptory shutting out of all their personal attendants. They were, of course, well aware that there had been a long-standing, never-healed feud between their late father and Governor Crichton. Nevertheless, when led, with every show of respect, into the king’s

presence, warmly welcomed by him as playmates; and shortly after seated with him at a sumptuous banquet, spread, they were told, in their honour, we can imagine that their youthful spirits rose, and that for a time they forgot their fears; a brief time indeed, for at the close of the meal, when standing up for the 'Grace-cup,' a black bull's head was slowly and solemnly placed upon the table. At sight of this ghastly object—which in those days was a warning of instant death—the poor, betrayed boys sprang up in great terror and drew their swords; but, in spite of their brave resistance, and of the young king's horrified remonstrance and earnest pleadings, they were speedily bound and led away to pass through a brief mock trial (truly a mockery, for their only fault was their name and parentage), which ended in their being beheaded in the great court of the castle. James the Second had neither a long nor a merry life, but probably throughout its continuance he never forgot 'Yat Black Dinour,' the name by which it has been handed down in history. Many other persons remembered it also—widows and children of fallen soldiers—for in consequence thereof, the castle underwent one of its many sieges, one which lasted nine months, led by the seventh Earl of Douglas, who took that very natural mode of revenging the treacherous and entirely uncalled-for murder of his young kinsmen.

In 1482 Edinburgh Castle became the prison of the Duke of Albany, who was placed there for justifiable reasons by his brother King James the Third. Of course the Duke made every possible effort to escape from his durance vile. Everybody knows the romantic manner in which he did effect his escape; but perhaps every one does not remember that a supper-party figured largely in the perilous adventure, and in fact was a chief ingredient in its success. The Duke had been sent a gift of some casks of rare French wine, and in those casks lay coiled the ropes by which the descent of the castle craig was to be made. With the rare wine for an excuse, he improvised a supper, inviting the captain of the night guard and three of the leading men-at-arms to come and 'pree' the guid red wine. Be sure the Duke did little more than 'pree,' he had to keep his head cool; but, by exercising the persuasive fascination common to most of the Stuarts, he made his guests (like Holofernes of old) 'so exceedingly drunk' that he and his 'chalmer-chiel' found no difficulty in

killing them all ; and after rifling the captain's pockets of the castle keys, and throwing the bodies of his victims on the smouldering embers in the vast open fireplace, he accomplished his wonderful and perilous escape. When reconciled to his brother, as he deserved to be for his spirited defence of his interests and rescue of him from the same castle where his turbulent nobles had imprisoned him, we may be quite sure that the Duke told o'er and o'er again the story of that supper, and the drinking of the 'guid red wine.'

There was a supper-party only too painfully memorable in the pain-filled life of Mary Stuart—'poor scapegoat of nations, and faiths in their strife.' It took place, not in 'the castle in the air,' but in that 'palace in the sheltered glen,' which her father had added to the monastic abbey, and intended for his own residence. Far abler pens than this writer can ever hope to wield, have described that supper in the tiny closet ; one that was so simple in its beginning and yet in its close so fraught with terror and grief and pain, with barbarous cruelty and treachery, that the consequences thereof wended their tortuous way through many succeeding centuries. The blood of the foully murdered Rizzio was indeed only the source of the deluge that ensanguined the land, and stayed not, until all the hopes that were worth fighting for were quenched in the battle of Culloden—

'(Where) the broken clans (were) scattered,

Gaunt as wolves, and famine-eyed,

Hunger gnawing at their vitals, hope abandoned, all but pride—

Pride and that supreme devotion which the Southron never knew !'

From 'the sublime to the ridiculous !' So goes the way of the world ; and therefore we descend to take a swift glance at that small dinner-party in Whitehall Palace, consisting of William the Usurper, and his wife and sister-in-law, too willing sharers in his perfidy and ingratitude to uncle and father. It was early in the year, and young green peas made their first appearance on the board. Princess Anne was exceedingly partial to that delicious vegetable, and loudly expressed her delight at seeing them, a delight soon turned into distress, because 'the Oranger' grimly and silently, as he was wont to do all things, drew the small dish in front of himself, and Princess Anne, who was in a delicate and interesting condition, had to see him devour all those delicious young peas

in a few mouthfuls, and leave not one for her ! Anne Stuart had many real griefs, yet she never forgot that disappointment, and complained of it to her gossips, who handed down to history the ludicrous yet too characteristic trait in the character of—

‘Willie the wag,
Who wagged us oot o’ oor land,
An wagged us oot o’ oor gear !’

It is generally known that for several centuries, at any rate, it has been *de rigueur* for the Roman Pontiffs to eat every meal alone ; yet, the writer has seen a beautiful painting of Pius the Ninth, whilst still King of Rome, entertaining, at breakfast in the reception-room of the convent at Sant’ Agnese, two white-veiled demoiselles, to whom he had that morning given their First Communion in the Basilica of the favourite maiden-saint of Rome, and perhaps, of all the Christian world. The fatherly hospitality was worth commemorating in painting, and will doubtless never be forgotten by the happy recipients and their descendants, nor by any who have seen the beautiful work of art that fittingly commemorates so graceful and pleasant an episode in the splendid solitude of a Pontiff’s life.

When quite a child the writer was told of a quaint little incident of the Peninsular War (not mentioned in Sir William Napier’s matchless history). The narrator was one of the brave men who had had the honour of being on the staff of the great leader and general of the British army ; one who told many tales, because many were asked by the child whose appetite for such was never satiated. This was, as we have said, a quaint little story of the finding, in a half-burnt village—from whence the inhabitants had fled before the approach of the invading and ruthlessly destroying French—a solitary human being, a little boy of eight or nine years old, who, somehow or other had been neglected and forgotten in the general flight. This little creature was almost dying of hunger. The officers themselves were not too well off (‘not to put too fine a point upon it’) in the matter of food ; but they contrived to obtain and to spare for the little waif a large slice—‘a really big slice,’ said the narrator—of black bread, and one hard-boiled egg : ‘a small egg—remember that, quite a small egg !’ The kindly gentlemen, who had that day braved a deadly fight, gathered round in a half-ruined cottage,

'through the broken rafters of which drifted in the snow ;' sitting, some on rickety tables, some on upturned barrels, to see the little man eat his supper. 'And never have I forgotten,' said the speaker (who was then close on seventy), 'nor shall I forget the clever way in which the poor little chap contrived to make that one small egg last out in almost microscopic morsels the whole of the great slice of dry, black bread !' One has often regretted that there was no artist at hand to depict in glowing colours that meal ever remembered by a brave man who had taken no contemptible share in many a battle, from the storming of Seringapatam to 'Dark Soignies and dread Waterloo.'

Time and space forbid travelling into the land of fiction, in which meals of all kinds play a prominent part. To all of us, will recur the dinner spread by Caleb Balderstone and its ludicrous yet pathetic accompaniments and makeshifts ; also the immortal breakfast given to 'His Sacred Majesty' at Tillietudlem. Nor can any of us forget the Christmas Eve supper at which 'Tiny Tim' clapped his hands in glad rejoicing over the roast goose and the onion and sage stuffing—the rejoicing that rose into rapturous ecstasy at sight of the wondrous little plum-pudding, triumph of his mother's skill !

To the writer, personally, a few meals of bygone days stand out as 'memorable.' There is a grim old fortress, the second name of which is 'Gloom,' standing on a lofty peninsula formed by the waters of 'Care and Sorrow,' and frowning down on the far-below village of 'Dolour,' or grief. The peninsular hill is itself a spur of the Ochils (than which there is no lovelier hill range in all God's lovely world), and on all sides of it, and in front, descending precipitously to the plain, watered by fair, winding Devon, is one of those mighty gorges we Scots call glens, an unfailing feature of our mountains. This gorge is wooded with firs and beech, rowans and larches, elms and wild cherry-trees, every tree and shrub that can flourish in those northern regions, growing, in parts, so thickly, as to make an awesome gloom even in summer days. Also there are great, red rocks rising into cliffs, that here and there narrow into passages that almost human arms could span, at the far off bottom of which foam and tumble, with weird moaning cries, the imprisoned waters of one or other of the little burns with the gruesome names. The castle once belonged to 'Bold, bad Argyll.' Mary Stuart once sp

two days there ; John Knox presided at a religious meeting in what is now but a grassy hollow of the hill, but then, the great outer court. It is truly historical, and Nature has made all its surroundings beautiful. Little wonder then, that a party of us, not one of its members fifty years old, and some of us quite youthful, and full of the rightful enthusiasm and romantic tastes of their age, living in 'the village of grief,' (in modern parlance Dollar,) should have set our fancy upon taking breakfast in that castle, in one of the rooms still habitable, and kept so by a couple of good, kindly peasants and their children. We provided tea, and ham and bread—the gudewife, the butter, the cream, the eggs ; and crisp, fresh-baked scones. Need it be said that all these were as delicious as they could be ? The eggs were of that morning's laying ; in last night's golden cream a spoon could have stood alone, so thick and rich was it. The caller air of a really fine August morning came in through the narrow windows ; in the pauses of our gay talk we could hear the song of 'mavis and merle singing in the good greenwood,' and catch the splash and dash of the girdling waters, *just beginning* their headlong race to the plain, and ignorant, as yet, of the imprisoning cliffs and the great boulders which would delay their mad impetuosity. Was there not, indeed, everything to make that meal 'memorable,' and to stand out as a bit of bright, perfect gladness, so bright that not even subsequent years of sorrow and manifold changes and chances can cast it into dark shadow or rob it of its beauty ?

'It is a far cry' from a castle in a mountain glen in Scotland, to a Capuchin Friars' monastery in the Province of Rome, near the Lake of Albano—ground as old, and with a longer history than even wild Caledonia's ! The writer remembers receiving an invitation to take luncheon in the said monastery, together with several other ladies, both English and Italian, some of them 'Religious'—members of one of the many modern charitable orders. One of the latter was own sister to a Friar of that monastery, and that those two should meet, was the *raison d'être* of the invitation. We set forth in three carriages in gay, good spirits, but with modest anticipations as to the material nature of the entertainment before us. The drive was delightful, going at first, along a shaded, avenue-like road, overhanging Lago Albano, its blue waters glistening with a million golden stars. On the opposite shore lay the ridged peninsula of Alba Longa—where once, long before Rome was,

flourished some of the fair cities of Latium. Rising high above it stood out with beautiful distinctness, the indented summit of Monte Cave, where Juno was wont to betake herself to view the battles going on in the plains below. And our weather ! Ah ! that was true Italian weather in early September, such as northerners never have, even, at midsummer. On arriving at the monastery, an unpretending, though large building at the end of a rough and shadowed lane, we went at once into the church, not knowing where else to go ; but the good brethren had been on the look-out for us in some spying-places we knew not of ; and soon, Padre Cherubino came up to Sister Serafina (the names are *not* invented), and he and she, motioning us to follow, led the way into the Sacristy, the only part of the establishment where our feminine feet might be permitted to tread. It seemed a pity that we might not go and eat in the garden, a glimpse of which we had from the windows, and which we were told was large, extending far behind the convent buildings. A large table had been brought into the Sacristy, the altar removed, and much other trouble taken to provide for our comfort. The Prior and seven of the community, priests and lay brothers, came in to wait upon us, receiving from their Superior the distinct, formal permission to talk, for which Padre Cherubino had respectfully asked. And talk they did, with gay good-humour and great kindness, anticipating our every want, and evidently revelling in the pleasure of showing hospitality in such an unwonted fashion, and to such unusual guests. They did not starve us, those good brothers ; on the contrary, they had decidedly over-estimated the feminine capacity for taking food. First, they brought us big dishes of sliced raw ham, which the Britons amongst us would fain have refused, had not politeness been stronger within us than prejudice ; and as the ham had really been well smoked, and the bread to eat with it was fresh and crusty, and altogether good, (home-baked, as we were assured, and used only on 'Feste'), we found our politeness not unrewarded. Of course that dish was intended as only a '*hors d'œuvre*,' and it was succeeded by perfect mountains of 'risotto,' or boiled rice, impregnated with 'rognono' and 'fegato,' all soaked in a rich gravy made of the same meats. Never was this true Italian dish better cooked or more savoury. We expected nothing more, but behold ! the serving brothers came in again, with equally well piled-up dishes of fowls stewed

in tomato sauce ; and he, who has not eaten it on Italian soil, made by an Italian cook, cannot guess how good a stew that is ! The faces of the kind brothers shone with pleasure at being able to set before us such a high-festival dainty, one that they themselves can but seldom taste. The only drawback to their overflowing enjoyment was that we could not eat as much as they imagined we ought to do ; their hospitable giving was after the pattern of old-fashioned Welsh and Scottish housewives, some of whom were wont, after receiving repeated refusals of a further helping, to put the offered dainty down on the guest's plate with a vehement, ' Upon my life, you shall eat it ! ' The Friars did not go the length of that innocent though emphatic swearing ; but they did dolefully exclaim, ' Che ! che ! a mangiato niente, *niente* ; non lo piace, che ! che ! ' The stew was the last of the solids ; but very good country cheese, and lettuce salad, and an abundance of pears, figs and peaches went the rounds ; and to accompany all, was a bounteous supply of red and white wine, pure and generous of quality, ' without a headache in a hogshead of it,' the produce of their own vineyards. Not many of our sex have been favoured to partake of such a banquet under such conditions, so one is fairly justified in regarding it as one of the ' memorable meals ' to stand out in one's recollection apart from the daily eating and drinking necessary to life, but which leaves no mark behind.

Memory, taking another wide leap, transports one to a large, low-roofed, panelled chamber, with richly mullioned, diamond-paned lattice windows, in Trinity College, Cambridge, and to a luncheon-table spread there by a Professor of the University, one of the greatest scholars of this age, who has since become a bishop. It was a private party, consisting of relations and near friends, but every pains had been taken to make it attractive, specially to the writer, to whose thinking the chief charm was the fact that the choice viands, some of which were celebrated ' specialities ' of the Trinity College cooks, were served on ' historical ' plate, gifts to that noblest of the Cambridge colleges from Queen Elizabeth and James the First of England, and such ' gentlemen-commoners ' as Sir Isaac Newton, Lord Byron, and others. The host had made a careful selection of these, with the desire to please, and fully succeeded, for the aroma of the pleasure has not yet faded.

These meals that one has tried to describe were pleasant in

their passing, and pleasant in remembrance ; but there is one that memory recalls even more vividly, all the associations with which are solemnising and awe-inspiring, for they are of the terrible earthquake that occurred in the Riviera twelve years ago. The first pain-filled hours of that too memorable Ash Wednesday, from six in the morning, till noon, have been described in this magazine by the writer ; but it is of the mid-day meal one would now speak, for its conditions were indeed so unusual as to make themselves remembered. The shops in Mentone were closed. All business was suspended, except telegraphic and postal, and those were carried on in a shed in a garden adjoining the post-office, which, but yesterday, a handsome structure, was now almost a ruin. No one in our Pension knew how, under all these difficulties of closed shops and impeded traffic, our excellent landlady contrived to get together the ingredients of a comfortable and abundant luncheon ; but she did so, aided by the self-forgetting, patient, bravely cheerful servants, men and maids, who showed these admirable characteristics, together, with all their fellow Mentonese, in that time of distress and loss. The meal was spread in the lawn-tennis court, where shortly before had been held a solemn little service of prayer, led by a young English clergyman. As the 'gens d'armes' had absolutely forbidden any of us to spend many minutes in the villa until its injuries had been carefully and officially examined, this lawn-tennis court was the only really available spot for the luncheon, partaken of almost in silence, with an effort, for *duty's sake*, surrounded by perfume-laden orange and lemon groves, within sound of the low, soft wash of the tideless Mediterranean, and under a sky of deep, illimitable blue. Not merely the original inmates of the Pension sat around the long, extemporised tables of planks set on barrels, but also several strangers who had fled for refuge in our villa from houses more completely injured than ours. We had not seen them before, but in the bond of that common sorrow, that common dread, strangers became as acquaintances, and acquaintances as old friends. The whole day was (as one has said elsewhere) a 'day taken out of time' ; and the luncheon in the tennis-court on the edge of the lemon grove will ever present itself as not one of the least unusual of the probably never-to-be repeated experiences of a day, which yet, spite of all its pain and sore anxiety and its solemnising dread, was

instinct, throughout its hours so strangely long, so strangely brief, with that 'peace which is the shadow of Eternity.'

Besides all these, one can recall many another meal made memorable to oneself by having been eaten in surroundings of world-known historical, or romantic interest ; as, for instance, a luncheon in the lovely gardens of Falkland Palace, where it seemed a cruel irony, almost *an insult*, to eat game pie and hothouse fruits close to the entrance of the cave in which the poor Duke of Rothesay was starved to death. Also, in the Governor's lodgings in Stirling Castle, and at Glamis Castle, probably, the oldest inhabited and most romance-haunted of all the private dwelling-houses of Great Britain. It has been 'above ground a thousand and more years,' and has '*stayed up*,' to quote Mrs. Whitney's witty words concerning another castle not so ancient. Again, in places even far older, one has had repasts never to be forgotten : in the ruined Palaces of the Cæsars ; in the amphitheatre of Tusculum (a city old when Rome was young) ; in an excavated temple of Pompeii ; in the grass-grown courts of Torcello, the mother of Venice, dead long ago. In places such as those with the companionship of valued friends, some of them learned, and brave, and good 'abune the lave,' the most prosaic of all acts has been made poetical, and invested with an imperishable charm.

G. S. M. MORGAN.

THE STRONG GOD CIRCUMSTANCE.

BY HELEN SHIPTON, AUTHOR OF 'THE HERONS,' 'DAGMAR,' ETC.

BOOK II.

'OF THE WILL OF THE PRINCESS.'

CHAPTER XII.

LASSINGTON ROSES.

'The Lost Garden we forego,
Each in his day, nor ever know
But in our poet-souls its face.'

EVERY man doubtless has his own visionary Paradise, though these may differ as widely as the men who see the vision, in hope or in despair of attaining it. And perhaps to most men there comes a time when they realise their dreams, *with a difference*, when a man may say to himself, 'If this were mine which only seems to be mine—if this were real, that is only dreaming—if this could last, that cannot last—I too should walk in Paradise.' Whether this is keenest pain, or a sort of dreamy pleasure, depends upon individual temperament; but most often it shades imperceptibly from one into the other, and those whom it hurts most would be the last to part with the dream.

Redmond Vaughan had his glimpse of Paradise when Vanessa Carroll came back to Lassington, and May unfolded into June, and each twilight was softer, longer, more pearly-lustrous, more richly flower-scented, than the last.

He had trained himself all his life to ask for and expect so little that what to most men would have seemed meagre and incomplete was to him the full joy of the magic garden. He had only to 'make believe' that it would last, that Sir Francis—

would not come in the autumn, that Vanessa and her companion would be always there, stepping with dainty feet over the dry close-clipt lawns in the twilight, calling one to another with clear, sweet voices through the dusk of the shrubberies, filling the silent old house with a faint whisper of rustling silken robes—a faint odour of sandalwood.

Sometimes the dream was kind, and almost cheated him into believing it real; but sometimes the swift procession of these summer nights, the waxing and the waning of the moon, and the change of beauties in the flower-borders or the freer spaces of the woods—all these seemed like the hands of some great inexorable timepiece, ever pushing on and on towards the end of the summer, the end of all things, the closing of the gate of Eden for evermore.

It had taken him some time, in his inexperience, to know what his feeling for Vanessa meant. He guessed it when she went away, and he knew it when she came back again; and he had accepted it as he had accepted the other facts of his life, with dogged cheerfulness and reserve.

It was a pity, perhaps, but it could not be helped. He had had—was having—what poor Cowper calls a ‘dear delight.’ Presently he would have to pay for it—also dearly: but not, he thought, more than it was worth. He, who had been always alone, would *know* for the first time that he was lonely—he would hear the silence, feel the emptiness, realise what might have been and would never be. But he would grow used to that in time, and he would have had something that could not be altogether taken from him. It was as though a man born blind should have the offer made to him of sight for half a year. Doubtless he would feel his blindness more bitterly when the brief space was over, but who could expect or even wish him to refuse the boon on that account?

So thought Redmond, knowing too little of passion to guess what tricks his imagination would play him when the woman he loved should be gone from him into the world where he could not follow her, but other men could. At all events, there was nothing to be done but to make the most of the present, as though the year had never blossomed into summer before, and would never ripen into autumn again.

Vanessa came back from town more gracious and more gay than ever, frankly glad to have left gaiety, and ‘the world,’ behind her, and to have returned to quiet and to study.

Arthur Kenyon, who found time among his other interests to watch her, and Winifred Marlowe, who had little else to do but to watch, both wondered a little, and were driven to doubt whether she might not be more of a deliberate flirt than they had been willing to believe.

It was plain that she was trying her power over her cousin, so cautiously and delicately that he might well not be aware of what she was doing—tempting him into the drawing-room or out into the grounds earlier and earlier, while more of daylight lingered in the sky—talking of him to chance infrequent visitors, and of them to him—taking for granted that he would one day see places and people that came under discussion, in a way that gently defied him to say that he would not—actually inducing him upon some flimsy pretext to drive with her to the market town.

This excursion took place after dinner, when it was as nearly dark as a June night could ever be, but Redmond looked out of the window all the while they were driving through the ill-lighted little streets, with a sort of dignified restrained curiosity, and never mentioned the fact that this was the first time he had seen them. His reserve on the subject of himself and his own habits kept Vanessa very much in the dark, and yet as far as she dared press him at all, she could do so more naturally and effectively than if she had known more fully his unlikeness to other men.

The two friendly observers could not but rejoice to see her doing for him what no one else had dared or tried to do, but they rejoiced with trembling, wondering what would be the end of it.

As for Redmond himself, if he did not guess at first that those slim hands were trying to remould his life, the time came when he could not fail to be aware of it.

The summer was still young, and July just begun, when Vanessa received a letter from Sir Francis fixing the date of his return and arranging his plans. He proposed to spend a month or so in London, and suggested that his daughter should meet him there. 'London is almost as strange to me as to you,' he wrote. 'You and I may have a very pleasant time, little girl, while you act as my guide and I act as yours; and I will try to find for you the places I used to know long ago.'

Vanessa was walking with Redmond in the garden, in the

perfumed dusk of a perfect summer night, when she told him of her father's letter and the news it contained. He did not exclaim or protest, as he had done when she talked of going to London before, but made a rapid calculation—said, 'Five weeks, then !' in an indescribable sort of tone—and was silent.

Vanessa could have wished that he would have said more ; but there seemed no likelihood of it, and she went on—

'I have been thinking, and making plans. You and my father will get on so well together, I know. I want you to see a great deal of each other while he is in England.'

'I have been making plans too !' said Redmond decidedly. 'I shall write and beg Sir Francis to come straight here as soon as he lands, and give us as long a visit as he can ; and you, I hope, will write and second me. We will try and not let it be too dull for him—Kenyon will help, and Miss Marlowe.'

'I know ! I am sure he will like it, and not find it dull at all. But also, I want you to come up to London while he and I are there.'

Vanessa made a momentary pleading pause, but not long enough to allow of an answer. Perhaps she would have got no answer even if she had waited longer. If you propose to a man that he should pay a visit to Venus or Mars, he need not be in a hurry to decline the invitation.

'You would enjoy it so much,' she went on eagerly, 'and as for me, I know just enough of London now to revel in acting as guide. The Natural History Museum and the British Museum alone would be enough to charm you for weeks, and I am conceited enough to think that you would find father and me very nice to go about with.'

'I am sure I should, if it were not quite out of the question,' said Redmond quietly. 'Let us make plans for what may really happen, and not dream impossible dreams.'

'But why should they be impossible ? It lies with yourself to make them come true.'

'You cannot really think that. All that sort of thing was settled for me years ago. Believe me, I am not such a fool as I may appear. I know that the life I lead is not altogether inevitable, but I believe that it suits me better than what most people would call a more reasonable mode of existence.'

'No one can tell whether new ways will suit them until they try. And this life of yours—forgive me !—it is but half a life !'

'And therefore suited to me, who am but half a man.'

‘Redmond !’

For the first time he heard a quiver in her clear, soft tones ; if there had been light enough he might have seen the dusk of her eyes deepened by unshed tears.

‘Nay ! Perhaps I ought not to have said that,’ he went on. ‘But I see whither your kindness would lead me, and I decline.’

‘But why decline, when all I want is to lead you through a door that stands open, into the world where we must all live ? There is no reason—you must know there is no real reason why you should not take your place there to-morrow.’

‘Pardon me, there is a reason, and one that can never be forgotten. And even if there were not, my bringing up has left me no place among other men. I should be a fish out of water, an owl in the daylight.’

If he had spoken angrily or passionately Vanessa would have felt more hopeful. But his tone was gentle and even light, as one answers a child who presses for reasons to show why the impossible should not come to pass. She was beginning to lose her own calmness and temper, for in the depths of her heart Vanessa knew that she was not merely testing her power, but putting her fate to the touch. If Redmond would respond to her appeal and make this step out into the world for her sake, it would, of course, be the beginning of a different existence for him. He had talent—he had an indomitable will—from learning to be like other men he might come to be a leader among them. (So she thought, not realising how the iron of Redmond Vaughan’s character had hardened already in the groove into which it had run—not fully realising *how* unnatural was the life that he had led hitherto.) And if he became what he might yet become if he chose—why, then, many things might happen. And in the meantime he was surely not going to be the first man who had ever seriously resisted her will ?

She found herself using words that she had not meant to use—driven to a personal appeal such as she had not meant to make.

‘Redmond, if I ask it as a favour to myself—if I have set my heart upon showing you London—you will not refuse me ? I know it will be an effort—I would not ask it if I did not know that very soon you will be glad to have made it—but I beg of you to do it to please *me*.’

'And I beg of *you* to ask half my kingdom instead, fairest princess!' answered Redmond, still lightly. 'I will give you half Lassington gladly if you will accept it, but I will not come out of my shell even to please you, for the excellent reason that I am one of those mollusks that cannot.'

If Vanessa could have seen his face, or even laid her finger upon his wrist, she must have guessed what his tone belied. But she had enough to do to still her own quick-throbbing pulse, and to keep down the lump that climbed in her throat.

She turned to walk back to the house, and Redmond turned with her, and they moved on for a moment silently between the tall standard rose-trees. The white roses glimmered through the dusk, and the red were globes of shadow, and all the air was languid with their sweetness. Vanessa was wondering whether roses beneath tropic skies really smelt like these, and whether the scent of them would always recall this miserable, baffled sense of having come to a closed door against which she might push and knock in vain.

'Do you mean that you refuse?' she said at last.

'I refuse,' answered Redmond. 'Why tempt a poor moth that has just wit enough to try to keep out of the flame?'

It was one of those double-edged speeches into which the one who hears may easily read a meaning that was not in the mind of the speaker.

Redmond was thinking of the world from which he believed himself to be shut out, and whose portals he had no mind to haunt; whose possibilities it was wisest and safest to ignore. But Vanessa not unnaturally supposed herself to be the flame out of whose dangerous neighbourhood he chose to keep himself; and the thought made her a little angry. How dare he degrade her to the level of a vulgar flirt, and hint that she was trying to draw him further than he might wish to go!

So she would not speak, and Redmond too felt that there was no more to be said. All the years of his life seemed to have been leading up to this, forging the fetters that he had now to wear; but the moment was none the less bitter because it had always been inevitable. He had always known that she would go, and—

'Take with her away
The brightest portion of his sunniest day,
The laughter of the land, the sweetness of the shore.'

She need not, as she went, have added gall to bitterness by beckoning him to follow her ; but there was no struggle in his mind as to whether he should yield or not. What she asked was an impossibility, and there was an end of it, except for a little ache of regret that she should comprehend so little as to suppose it possible.

A flight of three grey stone steps leads from the window of the library at Lassington to a border of green turf, broken only by a twisted ribbon of box-edging and small round beds full of geranium, lobelia, snapdragon, and mignonette.

On the upper step sat Winifred Marlowe, with a reading-lamp upon a little table that stood in the open window just behind her shoulder. The soft light showed the outline of her cheek as pale as ivory, and turned her reddish hair to burnished copper ; then streamed out across the turf and the flower-border, and restored to the geraniums the scarlet of which the night had robbed them.

Her book lay open upon her lap, and at her feet sat Arthur Kenyon, with his face turned towards the light, and his long, slender hands locked round his knee, talking fast and eagerly, as he generally talked.

He was only detailing his plans for 'first-aid' lectures, and expatiating upon the splendid appliances he had seen in London ; but perhaps it was sweet to his listener that he should give his confidence and ask her sympathy upon any subject, however remote.

For half an hour Winifred had been enjoying her book and the scent of the mignonette together, now and then lifting her eyes to watch the tall, dark figure and the slender white one beside it that appeared and disappeared among the dark shrubs at the other side of the lawn. It was ten minutes now since Arthur Kenyon had strolled round the corner of the house and asked where Vaughan was ; and on being told where to find him, had subsided on to the lower step instead of attempting to follow the directions given to him. And the two figures came steadily up to the house, Vanessa's light footstep hardly audible on the gravel, and her companion's firm tread keeping pace with it.

Vanessa's pale face was less full of light and life than usual. She stood leaning rather wearily against the shutter while Arthur greeted them both ; and then with a vague general good-night stepped in at the window and vanished like a

ghost through the gloom of the half-lighted library. Winifred rose to follow her friend, while Arthur picked up her book, rescued the lamp from what he was pleased to call an unsafe position, and reproved her for having been in a draught; and then, when she had nodded good-night and was gone, turned and challenged the silent Redmond to a walk up to Linnell Moor.

It was not, indeed, simply for the pleasure of a walk that Arthur had sought out his friend that night. In spite of the reserve of the men—and although he and they had become so friendly, they had, of course, their absolute, almost involuntary, reserves on certain points—whispers and hints and rumours could not fail to reach Arthur's ears, that told him something of the state of feeling among his unruly flock.

Valentine Elliot, for instance, would not betray to him one word of the men's counsels; but he could not help seeing that Valentine was restless and uneasy, avoiding him on the one hand, and yet not seeming to be so much one with his comrades as before.

Arthur had always prided himself a little upon getting on with Esau as well as with Jacob, on being as friendly with the rougher spirits who would not put themselves within his reach at night-school or Sunday evening meeting, as he was with their more amenable comrades. And he was more than a little vexed to find them withdrawing the surly friendliness that they had begun to extend towards him—showing a disposition to send him to Coventry, and to make uncivil speeches—not addressed to him, but obviously meant for his ears—as he came and went about the works.

It did not take many of these speeches to make him aware that his unpopularity was owing to his friendship with the owner of Lassington, and in that way it became a sign of the times, and gained an importance that he would not otherwise have attached to it.

How they must hate Redmond Vaughan, if the mere name of being his friend made them hate another man whom once they had been disposed to like! Surely there must be something more at the bottom of it than summonses for trespass and prosecutions for poaching—a kind of battle that sometimes is carried on with a good deal of grim good-humour, at least on the side of the many who trespass with impunity. There was the man who had spent two months in prison, it is

true, but he was hardly so generally beloved that his fellow-workmen should naturally make his wrongs their own.

Part of it, no doubt, might be a sort of angry fear of the man who was not like other men, who went spying about in the dark, and who was currently reported to see better in the dark than other men did by daylight. But it seemed to Arthur that there must be some private spite and malice stirring somewhere ; some one at work who for reasons of his own wished to keep ill-feeling alive. Who this might be he could not tell, and meant to find out ; but if he had known of that encounter in the wood, the secret of which Tom Waterlow, Redmond, and Valentine kept between them, he might have had a very good guess.

Meanwhile he felt it his duty to do what in him lay to keep the peace, though without very much hope of succeeding.

‘What is it you want me to do ?’ asked Redmond impatiently, as Arthur dwelt upon what seemed to him indeed the most hopeful part of the business—the fact that the newcomers had not come to stay, but that in two years at most they would leave the Lassington woods as quiet and undisturbed as they found them.

‘Let ill alone !’ answered Arthur laconically.

‘Let your friends the navvies alone, do you mean ? Take down all notices, and throw down all fences, and make them free to go where they choose ?’

‘No, not precisely that. But wink at a certain amount of trespassing, knowing that the nuisance cannot last for very long ; and do not stir up trouble. I know you well enough to know that if they force you to use strong measures *you* will regret it, whether they do or not.’

‘Not I ! I shall enjoy fighting this out to the end ! Either Lassington is my own or it is not. Either I have a right to forbid trespassing, and do forbid it, and will punish it, or else I will let everybody go everywhere, with my blessing ! I will have no half-measures. I should have thought *you* were no candidate for half-measures either, Kenyon.’

‘Nor am I, in a general way. But there is very little satisfaction in fighting those who are not socially one’s equals. It is like a contest with a set of children—disgraceful if you lose, and nothing to be proud of if you win.’

‘Those overgrown children down on the embankment are

not going to beat me at any rate. I have doubled the number of watchers, and next week I shall double them again. If you take it to heart that some of your flock should have a chance of reconsidering themselves in jail, you may give them fair warning from me.'

'I think they know well enough what to expect. What I am afraid of is that they may make themselves liable to a worse penalty than a sentence for poaching rabbits. They would do no worse if they were let alone, but——'

An exclamation from Redmond checked him in mid-speech, and at the same moment Arthur almost stumbled over what seemed to him at first a long, low mound—a grave, in fact—newly turfed over.

'What in the name of mischief is this?' said Redmond, looking about him with eyes that could really see better in the dark than those of most men. 'Fresh cut—I can smell the raw soil—and it runs the whole length of the field!'

'Draining?' suggested Arthur, wondering at the other's excitement.

'No; there is no draining going on here. Ha! there's something like drain pipes over yonder, though.'

'This is your land, then?' said Arthur, as they strode towards the dark confused-looking heap.

'Yes. My great-grandfather bought it—part of the High Ashes Farm—in 1744. Old Whiteman has it, a yearly tenant—he dare not cut a sod without asking my leave. I thought so! These are too large for drain tiles.'

'Oh, I know! They are laying down the mains for the waterworks, of course. I had forgotten we were just in the line.'

'The mains? But I gave them notice!—Ah!—Yes, I suppose that is what they are.'

The sentence began impetuously, and ended in a subdued and thoughtful tone; and Redmond turned away from the heap of wide-mouthed pipes, and the yawning trench that here was ready to receive them; and after a moment's pause began to speak on another subject, so remote from navvies and poachers that Arthur knew better than to press what he had wished to urge any further.

Sometimes Redmond Vaughan was frankly, boyishly open as to his want of knowledge of the world, and the surprises which his ignorance now and then entailed upon him. But

sometimes, also like a boy, he had his reserves upon that point, and took with Red Indian stoicism the shock of a sudden discovery, declining to ask questions that might betray his simplicity.

He was not only surprised now, but furiously angry, at finding the obnoxious waterworks bringing their trail through his land, after he had, as he thought, taken sufficient steps to prevent such a proceeding; but though he had not been able to help showing his surprise he was not going to show his anger, at least until it could take a practical form. He had, perhaps, some lurking doubt whether Arthur Kenyon, as a man of the world, would not advise a quiescence with which he did not mean to be satisfied for a moment; and Redmond set too much value on his friend to give that friend an opportunity of giving him unwelcome advice. So they walked together over Linnell Moor and talked about an article in last month's *Nineteenth Century*, and each was thinking all the while of something quite different and of much more vivid personal interest.

The steps that Redmond had taken to keep the Castleford Waterworks Company outside his domain had been very simple, but, as he thought, efficacious.

When he, as one of the landowners concerned, received notice of the scheme, he consulted his legal adviser, by letter only, and gave that gentleman briefly to understand that his consent would never be forthcoming. The man of law replied that if Mr. Vaughan objected to the proposed undertaking he must oppose it in Parliament, as when the Act was passed it would be too late to do anything; but that he did not see that any case could be made out against it, as the need of the proposed waterworks was undeniable—no part of the actual construction would be upon Mr. Vaughan's land—and the laying of the mains, which must be carried through several of the Lassington fields, would be no real injury to the estate.

To oppose the scheme in Parliament Redmond, of course, felt to be impossible for him, and much as he disliked the idea of it so near his own domain it would have seemed even to him somewhat arbitrary to interfere with what was being carried out upon another man's property. He supposed that he settled the matter by sending a letter to the secretary of the company, simply informing him that the mains must be

carried round some other way ; and when he received a civil but very decided reply from that functionary, explaining the enormous expense and difficulty that the change would entail, and the consequent impossibility of such an alteration of their scheme, he merely wrote again, stating that, under no circumstances, should he ever give his consent to their plans as at first proposed. Redmond said nothing of these letters to his legal adviser, who remained under the impression that his client had resigned himself to the inevitable ; while he for his part had no more idea that an Act of Parliament would override his decision than that such an Act would deprive him of the ownership of Lassington Hall and the lands of his forefathers.

CHAPTER XIII.

‘I SHALL FORGET—WHEN YOU FORGET.’

‘Flower o’ the broom
Take away love, and this earth’s but a tomb !

Flower o’ the quince
I let Lisa go, and what good is life since ?’

R. Browning.

REDMOND made a long round that night after leaving Arthur at Cross Rigg, and was not at home till long after daybreak. Even then he was in no hurry to turn into the house out of the fresh, sweet morning air. Report somewhat exaggerated when it described him as leading the life of an owl or a bat. He loved daylight and sunshine when they could be enjoyed without the fear of intrusive eyes ; and the rooms in which he spent his days were never altogether darkened except when he felt inclined to sleep, which was not usually before noon.

But for the last few days he had slept but little, grudging, perhaps, to lose any of the sunny hours, when by looking stealthily out of his shaded window he could see Vanessa and her companion reading or idling among the roses. The fair students did not guess, when their attentive host told them that he had arranged an out-of-door study for their use during the peerless summer weather, how carefully its site had been chosen that it might be plainly visible from beneath that one sun-blind in the south front.

The habit of years prevented him from thinking it possible to do what another man might have done, to join them beneath the trees ; but there was a poignant pleasure in watching every turn of the long, smooth throat, every movement of the slender hands, in guessing what *she* might be thinking of as the book dropped upon her knee, and her dark eyes looked idly forth across the rose-beds. And now it seemed a long while since they had talked last night among the roses. Anger is tiring when its first heat has cooled, and Redmond was cool now, though not a whit less angry than he had been at first. And despair is heavy, and even to a lover who has always known that his love is hopeless there comes at times a fresh access, a kind of ninth wave of despair. Redmond sat down upon the seat that he had had made for Vanessa, and rested his arms almost indifferently upon the little table which yesterday at this hour he had reverently kissed because her hand had lain there. Presently his head went down upon his folded arms, and while he was saying to himself that very soon he must go to his own rooms, he fell fast asleep.

The wonder would have been if he had *not* dreamed of Vanessa, considering where his thoughts were night and day. But he was never quite sure what it was that he dreamed—only there remained with him a confused impression of some dazzling brightness, like the gates of the sunrising, and Vanessa, all in white, with a cloud of white butterflies flickering round her head, moving on with slow, reluctant feet—looking back towards the shadowy place that she seemed to be leaving, with wistful shadowed eyes, but still moving away, till the glory of the low eastern sunlight seemed to engulf and hide her. And then, suddenly, she was back again, out of immeasurable space, at his side again in a moment, as though she had gone away on unwilling feet and come back upon wings. But while he took her return with gladness, indeed, but with all a dreamer's calm, he perceived that he was awake and that Vanessa was really standing beside him, in her white morning dress, with a bunch of white roses in her hand, and beyond and above her two butterflies were hovering, white against the dazzling blue of the summer sky.

A glance at the shadows told him that it was far later in the day than he had been accustomed to find himself abroad, but Redmond was not in the mood to be self-conscious. The instinct of habit would have made him uneasy till he could

retreat to the house, but a stronger feeling kept him where he was. This was the first time he had seen the lady of his love by full daylight and so near at hand ; and while his eyes dwelt hungrily upon her face he forgot—or was too hopeless—to care what she thought of his.

And Vanessa knew better than to let any surprise be seen in her eyes. She had slept not much better than Redmond, and perplexity had pursued her in her dreams, but she did not mean to admit that she was at a loss what to do. She was beginning to suspect that she might have done harm where she had meant none ; but womanlike she could not help hoping that the harm might be undone by ignoring it.

‘Welcome to this lovely summer morning,’ she said gaily. ‘And welcome to the bower you made for us. I am glad to meet you in it, because I have promised you a scolding.’

‘A scolding ? you shall scold if you please—but for what ?’

‘For the roses, poor things ! Why did you not let us go to them instead of bringing them *here* ? Macpherson tells me that the moving, at such a time of the year, will kill them all, and they are so lovely.’

She looked regretfully round the bower of roses that screened and shaded the seats and the little table ; and Redmond’s eyes followed hers.

‘They were moved very carefully, and they have plenty of water every day,’ he said. ‘They will live while you are here, and what does it matter if they die when you are gone ?’

Vanessa’s heart seemed to make a false motion and sting her. She wished that she had not mentioned the roses, but it was too late now to wish.

‘Macpherson has his feelings !’ she said lightly. ‘He will think that it matters a good deal when he carries away the poor dead dry sticks next spring.’

‘I shall not let him do that. Your rose-bower shall stand as long as it will, and if the roses are all dead it will be the more striking memento.’

‘Oh, don’t do that ! Don’t let dead things stand here, like skeletons at spring’s feast, to make you wish that you had never seen me !’

She spoke impulsively, eagerly, and again the next moment wished the words unsaid. What had come over her, Vanessa asked herself impatiently, that she should commit *bêtises* of which a blundering schoolgirl would be ashamed ?

It was the glow in Redmond's dark eyes that made her regret her speech, but he did not answer it in haste.

'No!' he said slowly. 'No, I shall not wish that I had never seen you. You have brought me a great deal, and you will not take it *all* away with you when you go. It is not much to you that one more man should love you, but for good and for ill it means a great deal to me.'

The night before—even that morning—Redmond had had no thought of speaking of his love to Vanessa. But neither had he cared to keep it a secret from her, and now it suddenly demanded the relief of speech, if his heart was not to break with it.

Her hand, with the white roses in it, rested upon the table beside him, and he laid his own left hand upon it, and held it, softly indeed, but with a force of which he was half unconscious.

'It is much to me, very much,' answered Vanessa simply, with a little catch in her voice. 'I am very sorry.'

'Don't! don't be sorry. Don't think me so ungenerous as to wish that you should be sorry. You meant no harm and you have done me none. You have only made my life wider and fuller.'

'I hoped I might—till last night. I hoped I might persuade you that—that there was no reason why you should not take your place among other men. I did not think I should leave you here, as it were in prison, after all.'

'If any one could do it, you could. But you do not understand. It is too late for me to fit myself for any place but this. And since I cannot follow you into your world, do not think me selfish enough even to wish to keep you here in prison with me.'

In spite of his words, his hand kept its clasp on hers and his eyes said what his lips would not say.

'You could break out of prison, if you would,' said Vanessa almost under her breath, and it seemed as though the words came of themselves without her will.

'Could I? Perhaps!—and you *could* fold your wings and stay here in cage for ever: but either of us would be flying in the face of Nature. No!—don't talk of what cannot be.'

Redmond's voice roughened and broke, and Vanessa turned and looked away, across the sunny garden to the still misty

landscape beyond—peaceful and secluded as only an English country scene can be.

Could she stay there in cage for ever? There was more possibility of it than her companion could have believed. After all, in her veins was the blood of generations of women whose lives had been spent ‘behind the curtain,’ in the monotony of an Eastern Zenana, knowing no law but the will of one man, no happiness but his favour.

These instincts stirred blindly in the depths of her being, real but unformulated: and nearer the surface and far more articulate were the instincts of her European ancestry, of women who had governed their own lives and the lives of others, who knew the world and had played no small part therein. And before—in this striving of her dual nature—she had felt any wish to speak, Redmond was speaking again.

‘You know already more of the world than I should ever know—change and excitement are the commonplaces of your life. It is your destiny to make a brilliant marriage—to be a power in the world. That is what Sir Francis wishes for you, what you have been brought up to wish for yourself—is it not so?’

‘Perhaps!’ said Vanessa rather bitterly. ‘What more can a woman wish for—and we all have our ambitions!’

‘Not—all of us. But you will realise yours, and more, no doubt. And believe me, I do not wish anything else. Only, I would like to ask you one thing—that you will remember some day that buried here there is a man who loves you. A man who, if he had been like other men, would perhaps have been able to make you love him in return. And if by any wild chance things *should* go amiss with you—if ever you should need a friend—a home—anything that a hermit could do for you, remember that you will find them here, as long as Lassington stands, as long as I am alive——’

Vanessa’s hand escaped suddenly from under the hand that prisoned it.

‘No!’ she said, ‘this is too much. Do you think me so base that I should go away and forget you while I am happy and only remember you when I needed something? I am worldly and ambitious, as you say—I have been spoiled by admiration and brought up upon false ideals—and I hope you will find some good true woman who will have the grace to choose the better part, and make you happy and herself as

well. . . . But meanwhile, we are equals ! I ask nothing from you, as you ask nothing of me : and I shall forget—when you forget !'

She was gone before he had time to answer, moving across the lawn with swift, sinuous grace, and out of sight in a moment. And Redmond looked after her with bewilderment that changed slowly to a look of dreamy, rapturous exaltation.

The lover in the German ballad, who loves the fair princess whom none but a king may wed, cries aloud in his triumph, '*But all the leaves in the forest know that I have kissed schöne Rohtraul's lips !*'

So it seemed to Redmond. All the roses in the garden knew that Vanessa might have loved him, that he might have won her if Fate had not set a bar between them more than twenty years ago.

Presently he rose, walking across the garden in the full blaze of the July sunlight, and entered the house and went up to his own rooms, meeting on the way a young housemaid who had never set eyes on him before, and who stared as if she had seen a ghost.

It was not his time for sleeping yet : and even if it had been Redmond had too much to do to think of sleep. His interview with Vanessa, and the mingling of keen pain and bliss that it had left with him, did not divert his mind in the least from what he had resolved to do as soon as darkness came again, but had rather sharpened his wits and braced his resolution ; whereby we may judge that the owner of Lasington might have been rather a remarkable man if he had had the chances that are given to other men.

He wrote a letter and addressed it to Tom Waterlow, then rang for his man and sent him at once on horseback with it to the works, with instructions to wait for an answer.

While the messenger was gone he wrote a number of other brief notes ; and when the reply came back he read it with the smile of one who knew beforehand what its tenor would be, and was not sorry to have his expectation fulfilled. Then he addressed the notes, two dozen of them and more, and gave them to his man, with instructions to call up coachman, grooms, gardener, and gardener's boy, and every odd man about the place, and have the missives delivered at their destinations as soon as possible.

The man, though he had been at Lassington for years, did not even know in what direction to look for some of the most lonely and outlying houses ; but his master's supplementary instructions showed a knowledge of the district sufficiently intimate for the making of an Ordnance map. And the contents of each note showed a knowledge quite as intimate of the inhabitants of each of these lonely little farmhouses, and the number of men—young or not more than middle aged—whom they could furnish forth at a pinch.

His notes all started on their various ways, Redmond remembered that it was a very long while since last night's dinner, ordered up the nondescript meal which his cook called breakfast, and demolished it with a good appetite ; and then bethought himself that he would go and see his mother.

It was not very often that he saw his mother ; though they were always in the same house, and it was his desire, as far as in him lay, to be a good son. As Redmond grew older he could not but be aware that his mother's injudicious treatment had been almost as harmful to him as his original misfortune—though it was not possible that he should realise how little of a calamity that might have been had she made the best instead of the worst of it. But small everyday circumstances had been more of a barrier between mother and son than any unacknowledged sense of wrong. Mrs. Vaughan went very early to bed and slept late in the morning—she was generally at her best and brightest in the middle of the afternoon, which as far as her son was concerned was much the same as the middle of the night. And during the few minutes that they sometimes spent together they had nothing to say to one another. Mrs. Vaughan had now no interests of her own ; and even in her best days she had never cared for those of her son, finding the contrast too bitter between the life that might have been his and that with which he was now tolerably well content.

Now, however, it seemed for many reasons to be a proper time to pay one of these dreary little visits, and Redmond knocked at his mother's door and was admitted ; sat down—as lifelong experience had taught him to do—where she could not see him too well, and prepared to make a little conversation.

Whatever else Mrs. Vaughan might forget, she never forgot Redmond's circumstances and disabilities ; though whether it

was love for her son or her own mortified maternal pride that was thus stamped indelibly upon her mind it would be hard to say.

But nowadays she seldom spoke of it, and so mother and son were apt to sit like hostess and visitor at a dull afternoon call, comparing opinions as to the weather, the prospects of fruit in the kitchen garden, or the show of roses as compared with those of last year.

To-day, for some reason, Redmond was determined to get beneath this weary surface-work, and tried to lead his mother to talk of the father whom he could hardly remember, and of old days when Lassington Hall was like any other place. He spoke of a law-suit, in which the late Mr. Vaughan had been engaged about the time when his son was born—a question of boundaries and of trespass—and Mrs. Vaughan's dim eyes even brightened as she told how her husband had triumphed and how he had enjoyed his victory—how he had ridden home full speed from the town, on the very night on which Redmond came into the world, to announce that he had won his cause: and later, when the tenants were called together to drink the health of the heir, he had called upon them likewise to drink long life to the counsel and to the judge, and confusion to every man who should try to remove his neighbour's landmark.

'And what he defended I will defend,' thought Redmond, while his mother went wandering on.

'It was on a Thursday—a Thursday in October. I know it, because he always said that you were a Thursday's child. And Sir Francis Carroll—his only child was born on a Thursday in the same month, the following year; and your poor father used to say that the saying would be true of her at any rate—that she would have far to go. But not of you—not of you, my poor boy! And if your father had known——'

'Hush, mother,' broke in Redmond. 'We will not think or speak of that. Bygones should be bygones, especially after twenty years; and my father and Sir Francis were always dear friends.'

'Yes, your father would have made him your guardian if he had been in England. But I don't think he could ever have borne to come here again, and, indeed, he has never been in Europe since——'

'Well!' interrupted Redmond again, 'I hope he will be

here this autumn, and we will make him welcome. Now, I must be going, for I have a good deal to do this evening.'

He bent and kissed the worn, faded face, moved a step or two towards the door, and came back again.

'Tell me, mother, if any one had tried to rob my father of any right of his, to compel him to give consent to any scheme of which he disapproved, what would he have done?'

Again Mrs. Vaughan's dull eyes flashed, and her pale lips set themselves in a fashion which seemed to show from whence her son got part at least of his self-will.

'I think I could guess,' she said proudly. 'My mother told me before I married him, "What the Vaughans have got they will keep, and what they say they will do. You ought to be a happy woman, for you are marrying a *man*."

'And I too am a man, and my father's son!' said Redmond half to himself. 'Goodbye, mother,' and with that he left the room, pausing in the ante-chamber to speak to his mother's maid, who was seated there with her sewing.

'Tell the housekeeper,' he said, 'that I am going out just at dinner-time, and shall not be home to dinner. And mind,' he went on slowly, as though weighing his words, 'if I am out later than usual, if any reports of any kind are brought to the house, not a word is to be said to my mother. I make you responsible, remember—not a word from outside is to pass this door until I come back again.'

'Certainly, sir,' answered the maid, outwardly unmoved, but deeply wondering; and Redmond went to his own rooms, quite forgetting to wonder at the unfamiliar look of those corridors that he so seldom saw by daylight.

At eight o'clock on that July evening it was already growing dusk in the thick fir plantations that screened the back of Lassington from the north wind. Even where there was a small open space, at the junction of a cart-track with the drive that led to the stable-yard, the shadow of the heavy trees still seemed to anticipate the night. In this space a little crowd was gathering, augmented by twos and threes that came along the cart-road or up the drive.

It was a somewhat silent crowd, consisting of middle-aged men who did not care to talk till they knew what was expected of them, and youths who were rather ashamed of their excite-

ment, and who showed it chiefly by fidgeting, spitting, and whistling under their breath.

To them came presently the outdoor servants from the Hall, rather more talkative, but betraying, when they came to close quarters, that they knew little more than the rest what the business of the night was to be.

But before they had had time to be chaffed by the younger fellows for their ignorance, a sudden silence fell upon the group, as up the path from the house came a tall figure which all of them had seen before, in some such light as this or even less, but which never half a dozen of them had seen together.

'My friends,' said Redmond Vaughan, 'I thank you all for having come when I sent for you, and I will waste no words, but tell you as shortly as I can what I want of you. You know that this work that has been undertaken up the valley was not wished for by us or any of our neighbours; that it has brought us a great many new neighbours who are not welcome; and that as far as I can make out it is likely to end in leaving our brook dry every summer, and our cattle wanting water. However, it is not being done on any land of mine, and I did not feel that it was my business to put a stop to it, when the Duke and Mr. Carstairs had given their consent. But you will easily understand that when I said that I would have none of their mains laid down on my land I was acting within my rights.'

There was an affirmatory murmur, and the young Squire went on.

'I gave them fair notice, and when they remonstrated I wrote again, saying that under no circumstances should I ever consent; and I heard no more of it. Now—is George Whitman here?'

'Ay, sir!' answered a gruff voice, and a stalwart young man of about thirty pushed forward.

'Did they say, when they began to turn up the sods in the five-acre field, that they had any permission from me?'

'No, sir. But me and my father did not see our way to interfering with them. And father wished me to come down here to-night and see you about it.'

'Well, my friends, you see how it is. Knowing that I refused, they have begun to cut through one of my fields, and so they will expect to do, I suppose, from one end of the Lasington estate to the other. This I do not mean to put up

with, and I turn to you to help me—you whose fathers lived under my fathers. I propose that we go and take up these pipes that these men have laid down, and smash them into pieces and fling them into the brook ; and if anybody likes to try and stop us, let them. I think it very likely that they will try to stop us, for I thought it only honest to tell their leader what I mean to do, and he gives me to understand that he intends to prevent it if he can.'

Redmond made another pause, and again there was a murmur from his hearers—a grumbling doubtful murmur that yet had a kind of grim relish about it. His quick ear caught the tone, and his rich deep voice as he went on had a thrill that would have warmed the heart of a saurian.

'Mind you ! I think that I have the right to ask that you should strike a blow for the land that has bred you and fed you. But I want no unwilling recruits. If any man does not see the rights of this matter, or thinks that I ought to give in to this invasion of my ownership, let him turn round now and go home, and on my word of honour I will never remember it against him. If any man is afraid, let him go home, and we won't remember that against him either, if we can help it.'

There was a movement in the group, and a gruff voice from the back of it called out—

'Gie us something to fight 'em with !'

Redmond broke into a laugh—a clear boyish laugh of delight that somehow stirred the hearts of his younger hearers more than all his words.

'I thought you would say that !' he said. 'Allen, bring up the weapons !'

The young Squire's 'own man' came forward, bringing a huge bundle of stout sticks, each roughly shaped to something like a special constable's staff, and furnished with a double thong. These Redmond himself served out, as the men pressed to receive them, the younger men coming first, but their elders following without any doubt or hesitation.

'Now, the spades, Allen !' said the leader, gaily. 'We have but six of these, but we can take it in turns to dig, and the others must stand by to guard.'

He called six names, and handed a spade to each man as he came forward.

'Have you the lantern, Allen ? Whitman and Bowler, take these two picks, and here are two crowbars for two more of

you. Form two and two, and follow me ! Allen, you come last, and keep your eyes and ears open. March !'

The pugnacious schoolboy who lies at the bottom of the hearts of most grown men, buried under a mound of common sense and experience and precedent, was awake now in Redmond, and thoroughly enjoying himself.

Considering all things, the owner of Lassington was not likely to have that lurking fear of making a fool of himself which alone prevents some of us from doing what would be very pleasant to the natural man ; and his followers were too unsophisticated to know that they were doing anything contrary to the law—nor if they had known it would they have greatly cared.

So, in moods varying from sober surly combativeness to high glee, the assembly raised a half-uttered cheer, formed itself as directed, and moved rapidly off into the fast-darkening woods.

CHAPTER XIV.

BYGONES.

THREE hours before the gathering in the fir plantation Vanessa was sitting in Mrs. Vaughan's room, trying in her turn to make conversation. As she came in the maid had told her that Mr. Vaughan had just been with his mother, and the information had led her to speculate, with a vividness of interest she had never felt before, on the relations of the man who loved her with the only creature in the world whom he had left to care for him.

The result of her meditations was to deepen the sadness she had felt all day, and to make her look with ill-concealed impatience on poor Mrs. Vaughan's faded cheek and lack-lustre eye.

'Oh ! you poor creature,' thought the younger woman. 'Why could you not make the best of it, for *him* ? How could you have bad health, or nerves, or anything else, when you might have been standing by him, helping him to carry his burden ?'

And then, cutting across a maundering remark of the invalid's about the heat and the possibility of thunder, came a

small cold whisper—‘And what better are you? You have put away from yourself, as an impossibility, the very thought of that life of devotion and self-sacrifice which you think she might have found so blessed.’

‘But she is his mother,’ objected Vanessa faintly to herself, and swift as light herself made answer, ‘And you, if you were good enough, might be his wife!’

She started to her feet and walked to the window, and stood there looking blankly out across the sunny garden, making some reply, she knew not what, to her hostess. In spite of herself she could not help picturing Redmond’s life day by day—sitting alone at the dinner-table, with no face opposite him but that of his father’s portrait, which—he had once said cheerily—was his sole company in a general way. . . . Coming up here day by day, listening to that cold, unmeaning voice of the woman who had spoiled his life, and going out from there to roam the dark fields and woods all alone. . . . And by and by there would not even be that room to visit, or even that vague semblance of human affection to fill the empty places in his heart. . . .

A pause roused Vanessa from her thoughts to rack her brains afresh for something to say, and to feel a momentary annoyance at the letter-writing that had detained Winifred Marlowe from accompanying her as usual.

‘Win can talk to her better than I can,’ she thought impatiently. ‘And I—I don’t even know whether I am supposed to be myself or my mother to-day!’

The next coherent sentence that came in that faltering nerveless voice settled that question beyond a doubt.

‘And they tell me that Sir Francis is coming back the end of this summer, to fetch you and—the little girl. My dear, I could never bring myself to ask before, but what have you done with your little girl?’

For once Vanessa felt too sad and sick at heart to attempt to rectify the ever-recurring confusion of the poor lady’s ideas. She made no answer, and the other went on.

‘I am sure you did not wonder that I did not ask her here. I am not so unjust as to blame her—my dear husband always said that no one was to blame her, and on everybody’s account it was to be as little talked of as possible. But as a mother yourself you will quite understand why I could not bear to see her.’

Vanessa's heart seemed to stand still. *What*—she asked herself—what was it that was to be as little talked of as possible? But there was nothing to be gained by asking that question aloud, and so perhaps breaking the vague thread of recollection that might end by unfolding the mystery.

'I understand,' she said slowly, as the other seemed to wait for an answer. 'But, it is a long time ago, is it not, since the child was here?'

'Oh yes! a long time. And poor Redmond himself says that by-gones should be by-gones. But there are some things that can never go by, to a mother's memory. I try to blame nobody—it was the will of God, I suppose—but, I can never forget.'

'She is insane, poor woman!—quite insane! Why should I care what she says?' thought Vanessa, but in spite of herself her lips seemed to form a question. 'What was it happened? How did it happen?'

'Oh, my dear! I cannot bring myself to speak of it, even now. It would be too painful for us both. I have had to forbid old Moulson to speak of it to me—she is most faithful and devoted, poor thing! but in that rank of life they are not sensitive, they will keep dwelling upon what one cannot bear to think of.'

'Moulson? There is no old servant in the house of that name, I think,' thought Vanessa. 'Was she the housekeeper, and will her successor know what she might have told me?'

She hardly knew with what excuse she ended the interview and left the room: but from it Vanessa went straight to the sunny western parlour where Mrs. Welby, the housekeeper, had her abode.

The housekeeper was a kind, motherly body; and something in the young lady's face startled her into the belief that some illness or accident required her aid. But before she could speak the first question that was put to her at once relieved and surprised her.

'Mrs. Welby, will you tell me, please, were you in this house more than twenty years ago?'

'No, Miss Carroll! I've been here a good while, but not so long as that—not more than fifteen years.'

'What was the name of the housekeeper who was here before you?'

'Mrs. Moulson. She was here a long time, and lived on here after she was too old for work, until she died.'

'You knew her then ! I daresay she often told you of things that took place before you came. Did she tell you about—the accident—that happened to Mr. Vaughan ?'

'Yes, Miss Carroll. Many a time. She nursed him after it, for poor Mrs. Vaughan could not bear to go near or to see him, and the woman that had been his nurse was sent away that very day.'

'Why ?'

'Well, you see, miss, it was considered that it was her fault, for she hadn't ought to have left the room, and if she had been in the room it would never have happened.'

'But what was it that happened ?'

Mrs. Welby gave a quick look at her questioner's face, then fidgeted a moment with her hands, and turned away and reached a huge account-book from the shelf.

'It's an old story, Miss Carroll, and what harm was done can't be helped now, and I'm sure Mr. Vaughan himself wouldn't wished it talked about nor raked up, and he's the best right to judge. And I've some accounts to see to, so I'm sure you'll excuse me——'

'No !' said Vanessa almost in a whisper, 'you shall not put me off so. Just tell me one thing—two things—and I will not keep you long. First, *what* was it that happened ?'

The housekeeper looked as though she would have given half a year's salary not to speak, but she did speak notwithstanding.

'It was this way, so old Mrs. Moulson's told me many a time. The nurse had moved the guard away to make up the fire, and she found there were no coals in the room, and she went out to fetch some. Mr. Redmond was four years old then—he was sitting in a high chair betwixt the table and the grate. He was old enough to remember and to tell them afterwards how it was. He was pushing with his hands against the edge of the table, trying to push the chair back so as he could get down. And he tilted it a bit. And the—the other little child, that was running about the room, ran at him laughing, and gave the chair a push. That over-balanced it, and he fell with his head against the fire back, and when the nurse came in again she found him there. They had the best of doctors, two or three of them ;

and Mrs. Moulson nursed him as though he had been her own, but his face was marked as you see it, and nothing would give him the use of his right hand again.'

Vanessa moistened her dry parted lips.

'And who was—the other child?' she asked deliberately.

Again Mrs. Welby looked round as if for some way of escape, but those dark, burning eyes held her fast.

'Oh, my dear young lady!' she cried pityingly. 'Don't you remember? Did they never tell you?'

'You mean, then, that I did it!—I was the child!' said Vanessa in a shuddering half-whisper; and as the good woman looked into her face she forgot all differences of station, and drew the slim trembling figure into her arms, and chafed the cold slender hands in her own large comfortable grasp.

'Oh, my dear! I never gave it a thought that you didn't know, or I'd have bitten my tongue out before you'd have got the truth out of me. But don't take it to heart so. There! it was the Lord's will, we know, and you were no more to blame than the chair or the table, so to speak.'

'Does he—does Mr. Vaughan think that I know it?' asked the girl, half unconscious that she was speaking aloud.

'I couldn't say, I'm sure. I've never heard him speak a word about the matter. But remembering it all himself, he might think that you did the same—though to be sure, you were a year younger—and that's a good deal at that age. And I daresay your parents would take care that you never heard anything more about it when you went away—and quite right too.'

'I seem to remember—something—now! I remember missing a playmate—but I did not know who it was that I missed. And something used to frighten me, and I used to wake up and cry, and they told me it was a bad dream. And then as I grew older the dream went quite away.'

'And that's the right way to look at it, my dear, if you'll excuse me saying so. It was the Lord's will, as I said before; and Mr. Vaughan's that sort of gentleman that it would vex him more than anything to know that you distressed yourself about it. So let bygones be bygones, and put it all out of your mind as soon as you can.'

'You are very kind,' said Vanessa gently, and with the

simple gesture of a sorrowful child she turned and kissed the kind, distressed face that was so near her own. 'I will not hinder you any longer ; and please don't tell any one that I did not know, or that I asked you about it.'

She was gone in a moment, 'with her face as white as her dress,' as Mrs. Welby afterwards put it to herself ; 'and I with not sense enough to make her stop till I could get her a glass of wine, or a cup of hot tea to comfort her a bit. But as for Mr. Vaughan, if it's him she's vexing herself about, and I suppose it is, I could tell her, if I durst—the pretty creature—how she could make *him* good amends for all that's gone amiss. If I'm any judge, he'd sooner have her than his right hand, and if his face pleases her as it is, he wouldn't change it for as handsome a one as the Lord first meant it to be—and he'd have been as handsome as a picture, too ! But whether she'll ever ask him what she could do to make it up to him, or whether he'd tell her if she *did* ask him, is more than I can say, even after noticing the ways of gentlefolks for over thirty years.'

(To be continued.)

FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW.

Words we leave behind us. LANGUAGE, like history, is always in the making. We are continually adding new words, and, though not so continually, dropping out old ones. The French are doing this in a wholesale manner just now by the simple method of adopting English terms in all their naked simplicity—but with a wonderfully polished pronunciation—straight into their family. A large number of these words refer to athletics, ‘le sport’ in fact, and to tailors’ garments—‘tailor-mades’ being quite the correct thing for a Parisian lady at the races. A few of them are social idioms, imported along with the custom they refer to. A lady is no longer *chez-soi*, but ‘at home,’ and wears at that function a ‘tea-gown.’ But French is not the only language which is expanding, and adoption is not the only method of expansion. Of course new inventions mean new terms, new ideas new methods of expressing them. The systems of word-making differ. One much in favour is the actual construction of words from roots originally hailing from Greek or Latin—for example, such words as phonograph, gramophone. These words are of course logically, or rather philologically, correct, but they are not interesting. They have no story at their back, nothing but the bald uninteresting present. You can imagine folk sitting down at a desk and constructing them bit by bit in cold blood. But the additions to our language are not all so, many of them have ‘growed’ or arrived by accident.

It interests me to remember that the common or garden combination of bread and meat, which I buy in haste at a railway station because there is nothing else which can be manipulated without knives and forks and a number of other gewgaws, is an invention of Lord Sandwich, who was inspired to the great work by the crying need of something which should sustain him and yet not seriously interfere with the business of his life at the card-table. Chesterfields, Mackin-

toshes, and Macadam are memories of the great, who live in deeds and concrete things as well as words. Boycott, a verb now used by the many, is a reminiscence of the early days of Irish agitation and a landlord who was starved and sent to Coventry by his tenants. Scarcely any great event or any social upheaval but has left us a legacy of new words as well as phrases. What will come to us out of the Dreyfus turmoils? Looked at this way a very large number of our words are dictionaries of National Biography, monuments that mark the track of history. And how many families have amongst themselves terms—names, phrases, coined words—which are handed on and down until a good-sized piece of a new language is formed!

To me at least there is a zest in remembering that all along the track we leave traces of our little lives, that we leave something extra for the inheritance of the coming age, be it only an additional word or a newly turned phrase.

* * * * *

**Mrs. Humphrey Ward's
Difficulties
with the
Moon.**

Mrs. Humphrey Ward has been opening a school and delivering a speech at Burley-in-Wharfedale. This fact is noteworthy for two points. First, Mrs. Ward prefers her study to a platform, and very rarely lets herself be seen. Second, her speech was interesting beyond most speeches that I have ever read or heard of hers. Perhaps the fact that she was away in Yorkshire, among her own relations, was partly the reason, but certain it was that she was more anecdotal, more willing to speak easily and freely of herself, and more humorous than usual.

Her subject was the advantages girls had now educationally over those of a generation ago. All the science that ever came to her in the process of education came as far as she could remember from 'The Child's Guide to Science,' from an early edition, she hastened to add, for that work had no doubt been brought up to date since. It covered, she remembered, the whole field of science in one little fat book; and she and her schoolfellows learnt it by heart in question and answer like a catechism. There were no explanations, no experiments, no black-board teaching, no pictures or diagrams. And to the present day, in any of those stories it had been her amusement and pleasure to write, she could not, for the life of her, make the moon rise at the right time. Unless her youngest daughter

came to her aid she was lost, and during the weeks after a book came out, bewildered letters from puzzled readers reminded her dolefully that 'The Child's Guide to Science' was not, after all, a very safe or a very efficient guide to one's infant steps. Now modern schoolgirls would know all about the moon and its performances when they came to paint pictures or write novels, for they would be rationally and consistently taught; they would have every help that the experience of many full and experimental years could now give to their founders and teachers. She hoped also that they would more and more realise what it was to be admitted to the chances and opportunities of the modern world.

Incidentally, too, Mrs. Ward laid her finger on the fascination of Haworth, and the graves of the Brontës, to which she was going the following day. She said: 'No one whose concern in life had lain in any degree with literature can approach Haworth without emotion, not only because of the fame that was won there, the pathos of the story of genius and of death that was enacted there, but also because of the struggle for knowledge that went on there in that quiet parsonage among those three sisters—the indomitable courage with which those three lonely girls threw themselves into the quest for those indispensable intellectual tools that came to their younger sisters nowadays so easily.'

* * * * *

So Superior! On these same intellectual privileges, more particularly those dispensed at Newnham College, Père Didon has recently delivered himself. This gentleman has been making a tour of English educational establishments, Eton, the Board Schools, and the Universities. And either his courtesy has been developed out of all recognition as truth, or he really is all surprised and delighted beyond expectation at our systems and results. Of Newnham he had no previous conception, and two points seem to have struck him, as indeed they must strike every stranger. One was the liberty given and the absolute trust placed in the students or school-pupil—for he observed it in all our public schools. The other was the important place allotted in the life of the college to sports. At the very least they daily enjoy two hours of out-door recreation, 'which,' said he, 'is more than we give to our French boys, much less the young girls.'

Further: 'It is plain that the one aim of Newnham is to

give to its pupils an instruction superior to that given elsewhere to males. Newnham is doing practical work. It is not ranting nor clamouring for women's rights; it is educating British girlhood in such a way as to give it in womanhood a mental superiority, which is perhaps the principle, the origin, of all rights.'

And much further still :

'And now I must tell you that from what I have heard—and this from sources above suspicion—it seems to be an established and recognised fact—even distinguished men are bound to admit it—that, be it in mathematics, in classics, in languages, in philosophy, or in other subjects, your English girls can full well hold their own with the male university student.'

Oh, gallant Père Didon ! how we thank you for your candour and as well the sources above suspicion who gave you information so soothing to our feminine minds ! Of course we knew it all before. We have known for a long time, ever since as babies we cut our teeth long before our brothers, that we were the superior sex. Only we don't often say it so blatantly. But occasionally, very occasionally, when we are tired and our eyes and hearts ache and life seems a howling wilderness of particles and theories and old French, we decide after all that we are not much of a sex, and that the one thing we want is a strong man's hand on our heads and a voice to say, 'Don't worry, little one, don't worry.' But then that is so very occasionally. Perhaps I had better not have mentioned it.

* * * * *

**Mrs. Hemans'
Memorial.**

For a long time a sort of spasmodic agitation has been going on to secure the erection of some sort of memorial to Mrs. Hemans in her native city. And at last it has got itself accomplished. It is a very modest memorial, merely a tablet on the house, 118, Duke Street, where she was born on the 25th of September, 1793. It was a graceful and proper thing to prevent the memory of a graceful writer from losing its connection with her home. Of course, in no sense is Mrs. Hemans a great poet. But some of her work finds a place in most school reading-books, and has a simple pathos and enthusiasm which tingle youthful imagination. She wrote too much to be equal, but in the best of her work there is a naturalness which makes for grace, and which in her artificial, over-dressed, wordy days made for distinction. The 'Better Land' and the 'Homes of England'

are household words in the nursery—at least if they are not, so much the worse for the household. We do not rise into ecstasies or enthuse over Mrs. Hemans, but she deserves to be remembered even if only by means of a memorial tablet.

* * * * *

Bad Facts. I don't want to touch it. It is a subject on which at every turn I may hap on naked tragedy or touch blunderingly some hardly healed wound. But it is there, and my function is to write of all that I see from this high corner of mine. And I cannot help seeing that strong drink, or some cognate stimulant narcotic, is stalking through the land making havoc in hearts, and health, and homes. And in my desk lies a summary of a summary of the evidence taken before the Licensing Commission. But, with all the summarising, it is a bulky subject, and prominent in it is the bulk of the subject of drunkenness among women. The returns given by the Registrar-General show that within the last twenty years deaths registered as being due to alcoholism have increased from twenty-four to fifty-two for every million women of the population. The Prison Chaplain, the Rev. J. W. Horsley, has given these figures:—

‘Of those who have been over ten times convicted and are chiefly habitual drunkards, there were in England and Wales, 5,188 males and 9,451 females in 1884. In 1878 the females were 5,673, and in succeeding years they have been 5,800, 6,773, 7,496, 8,946, 9,316, and 9,451.’ The judicial statistics, on the contrary, show a decrease from 18 to 13 per 10,000 of the women tried for drunkenness during the last twenty years. But the two statements are not irreconcilable; one relating to habitual drunkards and the other to all. The explanation of their diversity may be that women, even of the class with whom the police have to deal, are more afraid to drink in public than they were, but yet acquire the alcoholic habit at home in increasing numbers. And this secret drinking has been and is going on in homes of luxury where it is least suspected. Of this one doctor, whose large practice is chiefly among upper class women, said that when he had found habits of confirmed inebriety in patients of his, the cause was almost without exception traceable to physical or mental suffering, and chiefly to the former, and he seemed to lay stress upon the fact, as confirming his diagnosis indirectly, that women who belong to these classes are nearly always drunkards in secret.

Women do not get drunk at the dinner-table, as men sometimes do ; there is in their minds, for one thing, more shame connected with public drunkenness than in the minds of men.

And besides physical suffering there is often the palliative of inherited instincts.

Of the effect of heredity as a predisposing cause of alcoholism, Dr. Norman Kerr spoke very gravely. He said that 3,000 cases had come under his hands, and in rather more than half the number he had traced a history from former generations, and this although it is natural that patients and their friends should often try to conceal the truth of such a matter. In some cases the tendency passes from the father to daughters and not to the sons ; in others from the mother to sons and not to the daughters ; in others, again, it descends in the direct line. Paralysis, epilepsy, and general neurosis are also inherited at times without the mania for intoxication. Dr. Kerr's most painful case was that of an Irish lady, well-to-do in her day. She was an inebriate, so were both her sons—clergymen—two of her grandsons, and three of her great-grandsons.

These are the facts as I find them in a Blue Book. It seems to me withal, that though intemperance is said to lie at the root of the crime and misery of our country, there is something deeper even than that to which we must look for explanation—that is, that the craving for deadening or excitement can only grow in the soil of restless, unsatisfied, aching lives.

* * * * *

**Absurd
Frocks.**

Perhaps the want of reasoning power and logical faculty which characterise Dame Fashion have never been better exhibited than by her decrees this spring and last winter. Skirts, says the Dame, tight to the knees, then full and long and trailing, trimmed, and consequently heavy. See how the decree works out. Skirts tight to the knees, to make it as difficult to move as possible, full round the ankles and feet where we want freedom, long and trailing to sweep up all the dust off the floor and the filth off the streets, trimmed to get in the way and be as heavy as possible—these are the things decreed. Of course, for evening wear, exclusively on well-kept floors, those things do not matter so much ; but for wear on the ordinary average days of an ordinary average woman, could anything be more absurd ? So far, middle-class Englishwomen have kept style at arm's length—

which means in the fashion book. It will be another proof of their common sense if they continue to keep it there until it dies and is decently buried. Nowadays life is too valuable to spend in getting over the difficulties one puts up oneself in the form of unsuitable frocks. There are quite enough rough places to be made plain without that.

* * * * *

Domineering Heredity. Harking back to heredity, it is remarkable how doubts as to the strength of heredity as a dominant and domineering factor in our lives is gaining ground. Ten, twenty (or was it thirty?) years ago heredity may be said to have been discovered to the common people. It entered into the common talk of 'high-toned' persons who catch the echoes of the news from the laboratories. As a working principle it became exaggerated out of all just proportions. It grew like a terror. Nervous young men and neurotic young women hunted up their grandfathers' diseases and often worried themselves into acquiring them. The past became an implacable tyrant who hunted down its marked quarry with an invincible bitterness.

But the inevitable reaction has set in. Men of medicine and science are declaring that the principle of heredity is true only in a modified sense to most diseases. The disease itself—except in rare and exceptional instances—is not inherited, only the tendency to these diseases. If your family have died in past years of that British scourge of tuberculosis there is no reason at all why you need die of it. All you can inherit is a predisposition to it, a soil favourable to the growth of the germs of tuberculosis. If the conditions of your environment are such as to encourage these particles, change them. Be hopeful, be happy, and live much in the open air.

This is only one application of the new principle of heredity to one form of disease—a form singled out by recent events for mention—but its application is wider, far wider. The new principle of heredity is not law but gospel. It is full of hope. The old terror is dead. Science has often done great service to us common folk, but it has never done a greater than lifting this shadow of fate, this sword of Damocles, from off our heads and enabling us to stand upright and carve out our own doom.

* * * * *

Sunday. Is the dulness of Sunday inevitable? Is it real or necessary? This question was suggested to me by a conversation between Mr. Plowden, the shrewd magistrate of the Marylebone Court, and three youths charged with gambling and playing cards on the window-sill of a house near Paddington on a Sunday afternoon. 'Nothing else to do, I suppose?—First prisoner: No.—Mr. Plowden: You don't like Sunday, I suppose? You find it a dull day, I suppose? Well, I am not in the least surprised at that.—The second and third prisoners said they could only say the same as their companion had said.—Mr. Plowden: Well, I sympathise with you so far. Many people find it a dull day. It is a dull day. But you must not play cards in the streets. You must either endure the dulness or play cards somewhere else where it is allowed—that is to say in your own rooms. Go away, and try and endure the dulness of Sundays.'

So Mr. Plowden considers Sunday a dull day, and so do many other people, he says.

Who and what is at fault? It looks as though we had not begun to solve the problem of 'reaching the masses,' as we call it, if with all the Pleasant Sunday Afternoons and Evenings, all the Clubs and Armies and Services, the great majority of people find it dull. To say that they have not begun to understand the scope and meaning of Sunday is hardly worth saying, it is so self-evident. They don't understand the meaning of any day or days or life itself. But London magistrates have a shrewd way of seeing into the truth of things, and it seems to me a tragic fact that the day which should be brightest and best is often in highest and lowest circles voted dull. Where is the fault?

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' competitions, see p. 360.)

FIRST SHELF.

The National Union of Women Workers has sent us their Report of the Conference, last autumn at Norwich. It is inevitable that, as these meetings are annual, there should be a certain amount of repetition in the papers. Almost all this year are of an essentially practical kind, and deal with different forms of nursing and with the care of children. We wish we could reproduce Miss Lucy Soulsby's paper on 'Happiness,' which was addressed to the Meeting for Young Ladies. Every word of it is good. Lady Battersea's on the 'Amenities of Life' and Mrs. Steinthal's account of how a 'Neighbour Guild' is managed are also well worth reading.

VARIETY SUBJECT FOR JANUARY.

Antiquities and traditions of interest connected with any one parish personally known to you.

Such delightful accounts of old-world places have been sent in to Chelsea China that as usual she does not know how to choose between them. On the whole she gives the preference to *Tom Tif's* account of Bosham, one of the most interesting of places; but she must add R. H. C.'s account of her own dear Chelsea, 'the village of palaces,' as it was once called, and which still contains so much that is interesting in spite of the 'flats' and embankments which replace the dear and dirty slums of the mid-century. *Fa-ik, Miranda, Borderland, and Sea-Maiden* sent specially good papers.

AN OLD-WORLD VILLAGE.

A cluster of fishermen's cottages lying around a very fine old church, and situated on the bank of a creek which was once always filled by the sea, though it is now only so at high tide, such is Bosham village, one of the most interesting places to be found near Chichester. Though the fact of artists making it a constant spot for study has led to villas being erected inland, yet near the creek it keeps very much of its old appearance. Even the people are different from the country-folk around them, for they are of pure Danish blood and rarely intermarry with any of their neighbours, so that there are only a few names in the village, and every one belongs to one or other of those families. The cottages in the old

part of the village are very interesting ; many of them are entered from the sea-shore as it were by flights of steps, as they stand on the edge of the creek, while should there be a very high tide accompanied by a sou'-west gale, the lower floor would easily be flooded.

The church is one of the chief attractions to visitors. It is a very large, lofty building and has been most carefully restored. The walls are of rough flints, and on the south side of the chancel is a fine specimen of the herring-bone architecture. Once a Roman basilica stood on this spot, and the pillars supporting the chancel arch are believed to be Roman, though tradition states that King Canute was the builder of the whole edifice. Just below the chancel steps on the right-hand side is a most interesting place, the spot where Canute's daughter, a child of twelve, was buried. Bosham was constantly used by the king in his journeys to and from Denmark, and he was about to embark on one of these voyages when the child sickened and died. She was buried, as has been said, close to the chancel, and when after the Reformation the whole body of the church was raised to one level her tomb was engulfed in the masses of rubbish laid down to form a floor. In 1865, when the church was restored, some one suggested that a search should be made for the spot, and a small coffin of Purbeck marble was discovered, which, on being opened, was found to contain a child's skeleton. The only doubt as to the truth of the legend arose from the fact that a child's figure carved in the style of the thirteenth century was found over the grave, and the explanation that some one placed it there to mark the spot is not satisfactory. The figure, however, now lies in an old tomb close to the altar rails, while the spot where the coffin was found is marked by a tile with a raven painted on it, that having been Canute's badge. The crypt is a small square chamber cut into the floor of the church where the villagers could retreat in times of danger, and where in the smuggling days contraband goods were concealed, not without the support of the rector, it is averred. Its roof protrudes a foot or two above the floor of the nave, and there was probably once a chapel on it, though all trace of it has disappeared. Chapels also once existed on the north side of the nave, while in the chancel there is a window which has been only half finished. The tower in which hang the bells is built in Saxon style, a fact which is proved by a square opening in the wall and a window with two stones placed triangularly for its head, instead of an arch. Close to the door is the tomb of Herbert de Bosham, Thomas a Becket's secretary, while in the churchyard is an old tombstone with a ship in full sail carved on it, meant to represent the death of some sailors who were killed in a storm at sea. As you stand in the churchyard looking over the harbour, perhaps full of water, if it is high tide, the thought naturally arises, What a great many changes the little village has seen ! The Portsmouth of the Romans, it saw the church reared, and a moat still full of water is pointed out as having surrounded the palace of Harold, Earl Godwin's son, who sailed for Normandy from this port, the voyage ending in his promising William the Conqueror the throne of England. Since then it has been through many vicissitudes, ending in the quiet village of to-day, with the harbour choked with mud, and full of unseaworthy vessels.

Ship-building is carried on still, though on a very small scale ; but the village derives more benefit from the visits of artists, principally English and French, and several pictures of the place and its surroundings have appeared in the Academy. 'A Lass that Loves a Sailor,' by Yeend King, R.I., is a well-known painting, and the spot it represents may easily be recognised by any who know the village well. 'After the Gale,' by La Thangue, is another, and it may interest some people to know that the old man and the boy in the boat were studies from living people.

Many curious old legends are told in the village, one of the prettiest being that of the 'Bells of Bosham.' This declares that the Danes having

raided the village, carried off the church bells in triumph, but as they sailed down the creek a sudden squall upset the ship in which the spoil had been placed, and to this day any one standing on Itchenor Point, right opposite the church, may hear the bells answering the present peal; the truth is that an echo exists at this point which gives back the sound of the bells as they are rung. At present one of the prettiest sights of the place is a boat coming in with wind and tide in her favour, as the intervening points of land prevent anything being seen except the sails as the boat tacks and retacks in order to get round the various sandbanks and islets which obstruct the long, narrow channel.—TOM TIT.

CHELSEA.

Chelsea is a parish of perhaps the greatest historical interest in London, as having been the abode of so many illustrious persons. Much indeed has disappeared, but there still remain traces of many an old house, such as Sir Thomas More's, Stanley Grove (now St. Mark's College), and the old parish church, in which much that is interesting may be seen. There is the tomb of Sir Thomas More, and until a year or two ago there was to be seen one of the old chained Bibles.

But of all the old places surviving perhaps the most interesting is the Royal Hospital at Chelsea, founded as a resting-place for old and disabled soldiers by Charles II. One might almost say, one of the few good things ever done by him. There is a legend connecting the famous Nell Gwyn with the originator of the scheme, and 'tis certain Sir Peter Lely painted her portrait with the model of Chelsea Hospital in her hand.

The story runs thus: The tender heart of Nell Gwyn being touched by the ragged and desolate condition of so many of the king's old soldiers, implored him to build some asylum where they might end their days in peace. Charles in jest promised her as much ground as she could cover with her pocket handkerchief. She accepted the promise, and setting to work (so runs the tale) drew out all the threads of her fine linen handkerchief, knotted them together, and with this slender thread measured out the acres on which the hospital is built.

History, ever prosaic, rejects this tale as sentimental and romantic, and mentions Sir Stephen Fox, the then Paymaster-General of the Forces, as the probable originator of the scheme. Strangely enough, though over two hundred years this hospital has stood, few know it by its right name of The Royal Hospital. From time immemorial it has been known as Chelsea College. The inhabitants themselves speak of it always as 'the College,' and the old pensioners are known as 'College men.' The reason of this is, that in the reign of James I. a college was erected on this site, but during the Civil Wars it fell into decay, and was for a time used as a prison, and finally the ground was sold to the Crown, to build Chelsea Hospital. Not a vestige remains of this ancient building, save a few cellars under the chaplain's quarters, and yet through all the years the name has stuck.

Part of the beautiful grounds of this old place are where once stood the old Rotunda and Ranelagh Gardens, which name they still retain. Well worthy is the hospital of a visit from all who love old places. In the centre court stands a brass statue (now bronzed) of the founder, by Grindling Gibbons. And of all strange ideas, he is garbed as a Roman Senator and crowned with laurels. Anything more incongruous to one's idea of the Merry Monarch can scarce be conceived. According to ancient custom, this statue, on May 29th—Founder's Day—is dressed up with oak, a parade of all the pensioners is held—who all, as well as their officers, wear a bit of oak—a short speech is made by the Governor, and then three hearty cheers are given for King Charles; and, though whence

the custom arises is unknown, plum-puddings are served out to all the inmates of this hospital. This is also done on the Queen's birthday, the Prince of Wales's birthday, and Christmas Day. The celebrated author of 'Evelina,' Frances Burney, was connected with this old place; her father having at one time filled the post of organist in the Hospital (I had almost from force of habit put 'College') chapel.

Were it not that I fear I have already outrun the allotted space for these papers, I could fill pages more with descriptions and traditions of this splendid old Hospital, which is so curiously little known beyond its immediate surroundings.—R. H. C.

PRIZE WINNER FOR JANUARY.

Miss Mary Selina Orred, Lavant House, Chichester.

SUBJECT FOR MARCH.

Describe your *first* 'good work'—class, district, or anything else undertaken outside the home-limit.

SECOND SHELF.

PROSE COMPETITION FOR JANUARY.

Sir Walter Raleigh.

The historical subject has called out an excellent set of papers. Some of them, especially *Tartar's*, are far too long for reproduction. *No. 7* and *Ema* have given in the fewest words the most distinct picture of the man himself as apart from his surroundings, and *No. 7's* paper is rather the brighter of the two, so she takes the prize.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

'The Summer Nightingale,' as Spenser calls Sir Walter Raleigh, was born in 1552, at Hayes Farm, East Budeleigh, Devon. He entered at Oriol College, Oxford, and afterwards at the Middle Temple. The times called for action rather than thought, and at the early age of seventeen we find him fighting as a volunteer under the Protestant banner in France for six years, then serving under Sir John Norris in a campaign in the Netherlands, afterwards gaining skill and courage in Ireland during the rebellion of 1580. On his return home he was introduced at Court, and as Fuller relates upon the following occasion. Her Majesty, taking the air in a walk, stopped at a splashy place, in doubt whether to go on, when Raleigh, dressed in a gay and genteel habit of those times, immediately cast off his new plush cloak on the ground, on which her Majesty gently trod, and was conducted over clean and dry. His commanding figure and well-compacted person, strong natural wit, and courtly address, pleased Elizabeth and led to her favour, so that he was knighted. Far from sucking in the luxuries and vanities of a Court, while he enjoyed the smile of it, both his thoughts and his purse were employed in preparations to leave it for a very different life. In 1583 an expedition to Newfoundland was attempted. Then he sailed for America and added Virginia to the Queen's possessions.

In 1588 he took a brave part in the destruction of the Spanish Armada sent to invade England.

In 1592 he was appointed general of an expedition against the Spaniards at Panama.

We find him too a distinguished figure in the House of Commons; indeed, in 1588 he was a member of that Parliament which decided the fate of Mary Queen of Scots, in which probably he concurred.

Standing in the full sunshine of success, is it not wonderful that history gives us such few records that can reflect on the memory of this noble, valorous knight, who combined almost every variety of talents with indomitable perseverance, and who from first to last keeps our hearts enthralled?

But clouds gather on his path on the accession of King James, whose unjust barbarity was regretted by none more bitterly than by his own son Prince Henry. 'No king but my father would have caged such a bird,' he says.

It is with tears in our hearts that we think of his philosophic bearing in long captivity, benumbing the imprisoned soul to patience by reading and perpetually writing the 'History of the World.'

Set free for a while to pander to King James's greed for gold, he makes the expedition to Guiana, and then is sacrificed to Spanish spite, seized and executed, and can we read unmoved of his pathetic appeal to the people that his shivering ague might not be attributed to 'dismayedness of heart?' his appeal for their prayers for pardon for the sins committed 'as soldier, sailor, courtier;' that 'God would pardon him and receive him to everlasting life.' 'I have a long journey to go and therefore must take leave.'

Then we hear of his playfully fingering the axe, and smilingly remarking to the sheriff that, 'It was sharp medicine, but a sure cure for all diseases;' his forgiveness granted to the executioner; the manner of disposing himself on the block—'So the heart be right, no matter which way the head lies.'

Thus passed away October 29, 1618, the greatest man of the age.

'Even such is time, that takes on trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust;
Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways
Shuts up the story of our days!
But from the earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.'

No. 7.

CLASS LIST FOR OCTOBER.

DISTINCTION.

Ema.

CLASS I.

Tartar, Winifred Spurling, Geranium, Pixie, Ruby, Miranda, Lady Sybil Cuffe, Tom Tit.

CLASS II.

Effie, Titwillow, Ugunl, Holly Leaf, Philippa, Lilian, Doronicum, Lindum.

PRIZE WINNER FOR JANUARY.

Miss Norris, Burnaby Villa, Palmerston Road, Ipswich.

¹ Supposed to have been written the night before his death.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR JANUARY.

1. *I* am said to be 'our being's end and aim.'
 2. *I* am not a potato to be planted in a mould and tilled with manure.'
 - I* am 'a glory shining far down upon us from heaven.'
 3. *I* sometimes 'make the heart afraid.'
 4. *I* am a 'bitter thing to look into through another man's eyes.'
 5. *I* was 'born a twin.'
- (Author and source of each quotation to be given.)
6. If you have found out who *I* am, give a definition of me, original or quoted.

ANSWERS FOR JANUARY.

(Happiness.)

1. POPE. 'Essay on Man,' ep. iv. line 1.
2. CHARLOTTE BRONTE. 'Villette,' chap. 22.
3. THOMAS HOOD. 'Ode to Melancholy.'
4. SHAKSPERE. *As You Like It*, act v. sc. 2.
5. BYRON. 'Don Juan,' canto ii. st. 172.

'All who joy would win
Must share it. Happiness was born a twin.'

6. Many definitions are given—a few of them original—some serious, some satirical—the favourite is Pope's 'Virtue alone is Happiness below,' while a good example of the other kind is 'Une affaire de foie.'

MARKS FOR JANUARY.

60 : *Blanchelys, Eleanor, Irnham*. 50 : *A. C. R., Aspley Guise, Athena, Blue Wings, Bog-Myrtle, Cavalier, Dorfchen, Double Dummy, Einsam, Ema, E. T., Gil, Helen, Holly Leaf, Isabel, Malaprop, Melton Mowbray, M. R. A., Nemo, Pensfeather, Peter, R. V. H., Scott, Sea-Maiden, Sibyl Millard, Swallow, Syndicate, The Blue Cat, White Cat, W. Adey*. 48 : *All-Fours*. 40 : *Kittiwake*. 35 : *Trimmer*. 30 : *Ellen Vannin*. 20 : *Skylark*.

A. E. L., Lenore, and *Sophonisba* are credited with 50 marks each, but are requested to read Rules and Notices in future.

Blanchelys.—Glad to welcome you. You see you have gained full marks. Author's name and source of quotation is *always* to be given.

Trimmer.—There are some early editions of Coleridge in which the verse containing the quotation does not appear. It was added later.

Holly Leaf.—No telegram has been received from you.

Fourteen Streams is credited with 50 marks for December.

Dorfchen.—See Rules on last page.

The Half-Yearly Prize (July to December, 1898) is taken by *Melton Mowbray* with a complete score of 360 marks ! Her name and address are—

Miss Sanders, Whimble Rectory, Exeter.

Other good scores are : *Cymraes*, 357 ; *Eleanor, Lenore, Thorshaven* 353.

Irnham.—You sent no answer to No. 4 for December. Chelsea China cannot answer appeals privately.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR MARCH.

(*'Glory of Warrior.'*)

1. 'He wept for worlds to conquer—half the earth
Knows not his name, or but his death, and birth,

He "wept for worlds to conquer!" he who ne'er
Conceived the globe he panted not to spare!'

2. 'The king grew vain:
Fought all his battles o'er again:
And thrice he routed all his foes; and thrice he slew the slain.'

3. 'You die—there's the dying——'

4. 'Why may not imagination trace *his* noble dust, till we find it stopping
a bung-hole?'

5. 'Ammon's great son one shoulder had too high.'

(Trace the above quotations, and explain the allusions.)

6. Tell the story of the hero alluded to and the pirate or robber. (*In a few words.*)

NOTICE.—Answers (to SEARCH QUESTIONS only) to be posted before the 25th of the month to *Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon*. 'Search Questions' to be written *outside* each envelope.

THIRD SHELF.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

Miss Wilson wishes to know if Miss L. Wintle would be so kind as to lend her '*Le roman d'un enfant*,' by Pierre Loti. She will gladly pay the postage both ways. Miss Wilson will be very glad to lend '*Ma Grande*,' by Paul Marguerite, to any one who may like to read it.

ANSWER.

AN OLD-FASHIONED LOVER.—Please give instances.—CHelsea CHINA.

MISS HUDSON.—The note on Browning appears to us quite justified by the context of the poem.

QUERY.

MISS EMILY MOLYNEUX, *Holy Cross Home, Haywards Heath*, wants a copy of the '*S. Veronica Manual*' (Knott, Brooks Street, Holborn).

CORRESPONDENCE.

Chelsea China is sorry to have offended the great Cat interest and prints this protest!

DEAR MADAM,—My mistress tells me you have been saying publicly something about affection being wasted on unresponsive cats. Now I have heard the same thing said here, not by my mistress, who has some sense, though she is not as considerate as she might be, and I think it is very unreasonable. To begin with, how do you know we are unresponsive? Our family has always been dignified and reserved, we shouldn't think of wearing our hearts on our fur. As to answering every time one is called, no self-respecting cat would think of such a thing, this family is always calling me for nothing at all. When it does mean anything—at tea, instance—I take care to come,

Then they say I don't purr; I *do* purr, gently, as becomes a cat of high descent, but their dull human ears can't seem to catch the sound. Then my mistress has a way of snatching me up from the rug, and talking to me, and she complains if I don't attend to everything she says. I go round with the maid sometimes when she calls them, it doesn't seem to me that they are very responsive then. Why do they expect me to come up smiling when I am woke out of a comfortable nap? And when I do begin to talk they are really very inattentive. I have to speak quite loud sometimes before they will even open the door. Still they are better than many and I am quite willing to live with them and to do a good deal for them. Of course I catch the mice, and I call them if they over-sleep themselves in the morning, and I often superintend the cooking, though I don't always get a fair share myself. I should like a little more consideration; they keep a piece of furniture in the drawing-room which makes a horrible noise sometimes, and they tread on my tail and then say I get in their way; they forget that my family is older than theirs, they are upstarts compared to us. My mistress tells me you are cleverer than most human beings, so perhaps you will be able to understand my point of view.

I am, madam,

Yours sincerely,

CHIN-CHIN.

NATURE NOTES.

JANUARY.

Notes have been received from *Clarissa*, *Ethel M. Williams*, *Speranza*, *Skylark*, and *Enots*. Please send facts with date and locality, personally observed, not pretty descriptions.

Cheadle, Staffordshire, Jan. 2nd.—The Transparent Brown Snail (*Helix fusca*) was found in a wood on the Weaver Hills, North Staffordshire, crawling on dead nettle stems and on the leaves of the Red Campion (*Lychnis dioica*), which appears to be its food plant, and the resemblance of these snails to wet seed capsules of this plant appears to be a case of mimicry. The Glass, or Bubble Snail (*Vitrina pellucida*) was seen at the same place in the coldest weather, and even crawling on the hoar-frost, and although so delicate and fragile in appearance, this snail must be hardy to stand extreme cold. The Black Tipped Snail (*Helix caperata*) was also met with at the same place crawling over debris from a limestone quarry.

Jan. 8th.—*Petasites fragrans* in flower in Cheadle churchyard, and owing to the mild winter the flower buds of *Petasites albus*, which appears to be a distinct species from the Common Butter Bur (*Petasites vulgaris*), are just ready to burst open at Cheadle.

Jan. 9th.—Redwings congregate in large flocks in sheltered shrubberies at Cheadle, flying in from the meadows which are their feeding-grounds, just at dusk from all quarters at a considerable height, and then suddenly dropping down into their roosting-places with great twitterings, and raising a shrill alarm note if danger is suspected.

Jan. 12th.—My green lizard (*Lacerta viridis*), which I have now had for nearly three years, and which makes such an interesting pet, is hibernating, although not dormant, in a cool conservatory, at a temperature of about 50° Fah. When the temperature rises to over 60° and the sun is shining brightly, this lizard basks on the flannel covering its retreat, and then feeds on caterpillars of the Cabbage Moth (*Mamestra brassicae*), or any insects in a living state, but it refuses all dead food.

Jan. 13th.—The Song Thrush now gives us his sweet spring song, together with the Robin—sure signs of returning spring.

Jan. 18th.—Starlings assemble in immense flocks, and resort to roosting-places, sometimes in somewhat exposed situations, selected in some instances for reasons difficult to discover. The large numbers of these birds roosting together no doubt afford a certain amount of warmth, and often break down the smaller branches of the trees.

Jan. 21st.—The rooks return daily to their nests, pulling the old materials to pieces and preparing for family duties once more. Starlings also resort to the vicinity of their nesting-holes during fine mornings with their imitative song.—ENOTS.

Mytton, Yorkshire, Jan. 3rd.—Honeysuckle coming out in leaf.

Jan. 19th.—First snowdrop.—SKYLARK.

Teignmouth, Jan. 14th.—First snowdrop.—CLARISSA.

Teignmouth, Jan. 1st-9th.—"Forking the ground under a plum-tree, I nearly disturbed a cluster of tiny hoops of a delicate pale green, shining and translucent, white against the damp soil—the stems of the Winter Aconite.—SPERANZA.

BOOK NOTICES.

The Cloud of Dawn, by Annie Victoria Dutton, and *The Cleverest Woman in England*, by Mrs. Meade, are two short novels dealing each with the self-sacrifice of a girl imbued with strong Socialistic principles. In the first, which is to our thinking by far the most thoughtful, though it is the less skilfully put together, the heroine, Una, belongs to a manufacturing family, all of whom are extremely well described. She meets a rather shadowy young nobleman who has forsworn his rank and lives as a working man, and, being an orphan, and independent, she leaves her brother's house and sets up a home for factory girls. She is a very sweet character, and her mistakes and experiences are naturally described, and finally lead to her early death. In *The Cleverest Woman in England*, Gladys is a brilliant young woman speaker and writer who marries an equally brilliant Tory man, on the understanding that they each keep to their own line. The plan of course fails, and Gladys finally dies of small-pox, which we cannot but think she deserved for her wilfulness. The writing is lively and impartial, but there is much exaggeration. The most old-fashioned country lady would never expect a lady's maid in a London house to wear a cap, still less to drop a curtsy, and the rude sister-in-law would have upset any woman, old or new. Still, though Gladys does impossible things, she is conceived on natural lines, and her friend Imogen, though to us a most repellant character, has many prototypes in modern life. We take it from the name of the first book, and from the motto of the second, that the authors consider their respective heroines mistaken, but think that through such mistakes the salvation of the modern world may be worked out. They are the heroes who fill up the ditch. We cannot but think that both make one great mistake. Long ago Mrs. Whitney, in *We Girls*, started the illuminating theory of our duty to our 'nexts.' 'Do the next thing' is true in philanthropy as in daily duty. Our neighbour is after all our 'next.' Una and Gladys both tried to leap a gulf. There are many ways in which 'class' and other privileges may be extended to those who have just *not* got what we have ourselves. Hands can be held out to those near enough to reach them, and so we may be links in a long chain. Marcella made the same mistake when she tried to live with Minta Hurd. She is, of course, the inspiring influence of both the books.

COMMUNICATED.

The readers of THE MONTHLY PACKET are already familiar with *The Main Chance* (by C. R. Coleridge), but besides the novelty that invests a serial story when it appears in a complete form, the present volume is improved by a Preface explaining what has gone before. To those who have not read *Waynflete*, this explanation will be of service in unravelling the mysteries of the sequel. The story of *The Main Chance* is clear and simple, and brightly told. A young mill-owner, possessing landed property which he is not rich enough to keep up, tempted to raise money by dishonest means, and divided between the claims of his inheritance and his integrity, naturally commands our sympathy; and his surroundings, whether of mill or moorland, friends or worse than foe, are sketched in with bold, yet delicate touches. But beneath all this homely, everyday life in hall and office and vicarage parlour, there runs a current of weird, poetic imagining, which reminds us that heredity, so terrible a burden to Guy Waynflete, can assume a much more gracious form in his historian. We are not going to forestall the working out of the several riddles presented to us; indeed, we must own to being still somewhat perplexed by the author's views as to the effect, not only of the past on the present, but also of the present on the past. But, granting what we feel we must call poetical licence, and the peculiar temperament of the hero, there can be but one opinion as to the conduct of the hypnotiser, whose 'suggestions' tempt him to evil. The refreshing part of the whole business is the clear, honest faith of Florella, who is not satisfied with baffling the enemy, but must needs win him over to the right side. If the lovers have to pass through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, it is but to find with the pilgrim of old the efficacy of a weapon 'called All Prayer.'

ANNA H. DRURY.

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

UNDIVIDED INDIA.

QUESTIONS FOR MARCH.

5. What pioneers of Christianity had visited India before the formation of the English Episcopate?

6. Name in order the English bishops of Undivided India, with three lines each on the three chief names, and a life of one.

Books recommended:—*Under His Banner* (S.P.C.K.); *Classified Digest of S.P.G. Records* (S.P.G.); *Lives of Bishops Middleton, Heber, Schwartz, &c.* (some of these are published by S.P.C.K., but all are not in print); *Pioneers and Founders*, by C. M. Yonge (Macmillan & Co.).

CLASS LIST FOR DECEMBER.

CLASS I.

Jerne; M. P., 39; Honeysuckle, 38; Veritas, 32.

CLASS II.

Constans et Fidelis, 23¹; Klondyke, 22.¹

¹ Three answers only.

CLASS LIST FOR HALF-YEAR, JULY TO DECEMBER.

CLASS I.

(Maximum, 240; minimum, 180.)

M. P., 233 (had prize last time)¹; Ierne, 218 (prize winner for this half-year)¹; Klondyke, 197.

CLASS II.

(Minimum, 120.)

Veritas, 149.

CLASS III.

Honeysuckle, 112; Constans et Fidelis, 66; Maiden Aunt, 22.

REMARKS.

Bog-oak is pleased with the result of the year's study, in those few who have persevered. At least they must have discovered that mission history is not dry, and is full of encouragement.

45. The appeals of Hawaii for English clergy to teach them are well done by all. It was indeed piteous though not surprising that for seventy years the Hawaiians were left by us 'to die in the dark.'

46. Kamehameha IV., the King Alfred of Honolulu, and his successful introduction of an English Bishop and mission, are also very well done by all.

47. The answer on Bishop Willis's work, too, leaves little to be desired. That is a history of the laying strong foundations which, being hidden, are often forgotten by the Home Church.

48. The comparative spread of ancient and modern missions is a most interesting answer. The extraordinary slowness of the conversion of Europe, the undoing of the work again and again, is truly comforting in contemplating the slowness of the work in Central Africa or India, which is rapid in comparison with early missions. The moral of it seems to be—

'Faint not and fret not for threatened woe,
Watchman on Truth's grey height;
Few though the faithful, and strong though the foe,
Weakness is aye heaven's might.'

The Prize will be announced next time.

¹ Answered every question.

'MONTHLY PACKET' NOTICES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The readers of the 'Monthly Packet' are invited to address CHELSEA CHINA on any subject the discussion of which occurs to them as likely to interest others, especially in connection with articles appearing in the Magazine.

CHINA CUPBOARD PRIZES—

Variety Specimens. Prize, monthly, 5s.

Search Questions (Who, When, and Where). Prize, for six months taken together, £1 is.

Prose Competition. Monthly Prize, 5s., or 10s., according to merit.

RULES for the above—

(1) Papers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to CHELSEA CHINA, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co., Limited; they must NOT be addressed to 'the Editors.' (2) Each envelope must be marked *outside* with the subject to which it refers. Papers under separate competitions or discussions must be in separate envelopes. (3) The correspondent's name and address must be written on every paper: the use of a *nom de plume* for the lists is optional. (4) If competitors fail to comply with any rule, their papers will be disqualified. (5) The real name of the prize-winner is published in each case. (6) There are no entrance fees. (7) Prizes cannot be taken by the same person twice in a half-year.

[The Editors of the 'Monthly Packet' will feel obliged if All Contributors will write their names and addresses clearly on their MSS., and will enclose stamps for return. Unless these conditions are complied with, the Editors cannot undertake to preserve, return, or enter into correspondence about MSS. Much trouble is saved if accompanying letters are enclosed in the parcel instead of being sent separately.

The utmost care is taken in returning MSS., but the Editors can only hold themselves absolutely responsible for such as are sent to them at their own request.]

THE MONTHLY PACKET.

NEW SERIES.

APRIL, 1899.

THE CONQUEST OF LONDON.

BY DOROTHEA GERARD (MADAME LONGARD DE LONGGARDE),
AUTHOR OF 'A FORGOTTEN SIN,' 'A SPOTLESS REPUTA-
TION,' 'LADY BABY,' ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

A SMOKING-ROOM JOKE.

It was long, very long, since the smoking-room at Swanmere had served its original purpose; long since anything but spider-webs had adorned its corners, and all but the most ancient, the most offensively cold smell of tobacco had met the nostrils of the entering caretaker. A haunt for mice and earwigs, a lumber-room for invalid furniture—this it was to which the once so handsome and so gay apartment had sunk for the last dozen years, and from which, day by day, there had seemed less and less chance of its being rescued.

But on this late November day all was changed. The walls, although not covered with the 'gilding paper' of Fanny's prognostications, had, under a cloak of stamped leather, re-assumed all their ancient dignity; the bright fire playing in the newly restored hearth flashed back from many a polished gun-barrel and many a curiously headed spear, or more curiously handled hunting-knife; in place of the spider-webs, great horned heads appeared to stretch out of the dim corners, while the monotony of the polished oaken floor was broken here and there by the vivid yellow of a leopard-skin, or the dark shadow of a bear's fur.

In the comfortably low seats, with glasses of grog steaming at their elbows, four men, in smoking coats, were ensconced—

a collection of more or less worn-out sportsmen ; for this was the end of a long shooting-day, the first of its sort that Swanmere had seen for twelve years, and therefore a somewhat solemn occasion. The smoke of the fragrant cigars, curling slowly towards the ceiling, was as the smoke of the sacrifices which might be offered on a solemn occasion of rejoicing, for this day too was in more ways than one a day of reconsecration, the signal given to the neighbourhood that the 'Big House' was henceforward to be counted with once more.

A fifth man stood beside the fireplace. He was the host, and the only one who did not wear a smoking-jacket ; the only one, too, who did not appear to be tired with his day's work, nor to yearn towards a chair. Standing there, with one elbow resting on the chimney-piece, his tall, rather spare figure and dark, sallow face were fully illuminated by the lamp-light, while his intensely black eyes moved from one of the guests to the other, according to who was speaking. Although he himself rarely put in a word, it was evident that he listened attentively. He was not to be called a young man, being obviously older than two of his companions, and probably older than the third. The only one evidently his senior was a heavy-looking gentleman with a somewhat thick utterance, rendered thicker just now by sleepiness, who, to judge from his appearance, ought to have been a butler, but who happened to be a baronet. Sir Harold Hane figured to-day as the representative of the county, and was not yet quite clear in his own mind as to whether he ought to be here at all or not. Undoubtedly it was a condescension in the head of the family longest established in the county to give his protection so openly to an upstart who came from no one knows where, who might be the son of no one knows whom, and have made his money no one knows how. Sir Harold had undergone some severe mental struggles on the subject of this invitation ; and, dearly though he loved a good shoot and a good dinner, the fear of appearing too 'easy' would probably have carried the day if Lady Hane had not intervened. For Lady Hane had a marriageable daughter, and the purchaser of Swanmere was a bachelor, which statement will surely suffice the intelligent reader in place of all further explanations. In the event, Sir Harold was glad that he had yielded, for both the dinner and the shoot had sur-

passed his expectations; and although he still felt it due to himself and to the county to 'hold off' a bit, more especially in the presence of the lookers-on, there was no denying that what he had seen of his host in the shooting-field to-day had considerably lessened his interest both in his antecedents and his pedigree. If there was one thing before which Sir Harold's bull-dog pride was apt to come to its knees, that thing was straight shooting, and that which he had seen to-day was the straightest in his experience. But to betray the admiration he felt would never do before young Hambly, for instance, who was evidently not minded to capitulate unconditionally to the Crœsus, and who, wrapped in by far the most exquisite of the four smoking-jackets, sprawled elegantly in his chair, smoking Mr. Dyson's cigars with an air of thereby conferring on him a favour, and carefully maintaining on his lips an expression which could only be described as an elegant snarl. It is just possible that out of Sir Harold's sight the snarl might have melted into something suaver; for, as Mr. Hambly acted as a restraint upon the baronet, so was he in his turn acted upon by the baronet. In the other's presence each felt it incumbent on him to keep up a certain reserve of attitude, and each would have preferred the other to be the first to give himself away, a sentiment which resulted in much mutual observation, entertaining as well as instructive to a student of human nature; and such a one was at this very moment standing beside the mantelpiece.

The third guest, a bucolic young squire of ruddy countenance and almost as ruddy hair, was troubled with no such scruples. He had had a 'ripping' day, and hoped to have plenty more of these 'ripping' days. Further than this his powers of reflection did not reach, for which reason he felt at liberty to grin frankly at everything that struck him as amusing; and as most things amused this lucky individual, it followed that his facial muscles were seldom in repose.

The remaining guest was the one who obviously felt most entirely at his ease, perhaps because he knew more about his host than the others, or perhaps because a certain light and airy disposition which had accompanied him into the forties, was accustomed to carry him over most embarrassments of life. Not being of the neighbourhood would also naturally tend to make him feel less nervous about his dignity. It was he on whom fell the chief burden of the conversation, who, in fact,

acted as the necessary moral cement between the host and the invited.

'Of course, if you all assure me on your words of honour that the place was a desert three months ago I have to believe it,' he was remarking now, 'but I haven't got enough imagination quite to see it. What beats me is how you've managed to keep the things from looking *new*. That's generally the bane of restoring a place.'

'I left that part to my mother.' A softer light stole over Mr. Dyson's sharply cut features as he said it. 'I do think she has a genius for spending money in the right way, only, unfortunately, for long she had no opportunity for exercising her talent.'

'Well, there's a vast field before her now, anyway. I suppose you mean to re-people the lake? It is evidently destined for swans.'

'In the Belcourts' time there never used to be less than thirty swans on it,' remarked Sir Harold, feeling it incumbent on him to put in a word for the former and naturally more rightful possessors.

'Oh; then Dyson is sure to put on fifty,' laughed the airy Mr. Marriott. 'You just see if he doesn't beat the Belcourts into a cocked hat!'—a remark which struck the red-haired squire as so irresistibly funny that he nearly choked over it, grinning alone not having sufficed for the occasion.

'I would rather put in a mixture of water-fowls; swans would be a trifle tame, I fancy. There are some American wild ducks that ought to get on splendidly here.'

'There will be some chance now of the coverts being properly cared for,' said Sir Harold, with a huge sigh of satisfaction. 'Of course you'll preserve strictly; but the plantations need a lot of looking to; they've been a blot on the county for years past!' And having been carried thus far by his eagerness on the subject, Sir Harold cast a furtive glance in Mr. Hambly's direction to see if he had not said too much.

The remains of the elegant snarl were still visible on the exquisite young man's lips, but in spite of it, and no doubt encouraged by Sir Harold's example, he condescended to remark that it was really a pity the pheasants had been allowed to get so scarce.

The talk moved on to other forms of sport in other climes, and presently the host, much pressed by his most talkative

guest, gave the history of some of the skins on the floor and horns on the walls, somewhat laconic, but not the less thrilling tales of adventure, in the midst of which Sir Harold, unable, for all his interest in the subject, to keep awake any longer, suddenly lurched over the side of his chair, and, rousing himself with a jerk, solemnly gave it as his opinion that this was an unearthly hour to sit up to, and thereupon retired with dignity.

The effect of his disappearance from the scene was not unlike that of the lifting of a wet blanket. Even Mr. Hambly, relieved of critical observation, and cheered by a fresh supply of grog, permitted himself to lie further back in his chair, and began to puff away at his cigar with greater *abandon*.

It was again Mr. Marriott who took up the ball of talk.

'Well, you've had a hot time of it, one way and another, but there's another sort of time coming now, old man,' he remarked, in a yet lighter and more airy tone. 'You've risked your skin and made your pile, and now you can sit down on it comfortably for the rest of your life, but, of course, not alone, that's clear. You've got a house and you've got an establishment, and the next thing you want is a wife.'

'That's what my mother says, but I think both you and she might give me the time to look about me.' And Mr. Dyson laughed good-naturedly.

His friend shook his head. 'Don't be too wasteful of the article called time; not that I would for worlds hint that you are in any danger of even approaching the limits of the period called youth.'

'Only that you would wish to point out to me that I'm over them already,' finished the other, laughing outright this time. 'Really, now, all that talk about one's friends changing is a base calumny. I see with pleasure that you're just as great an ass nowadays as you used to be when we sat in class together.'

'Have your little joke if you will, but follow my advice all the same. I maintain that what you want is a wife, and with as little delay as possible.'

'Certainly Swanmere does require a hostess,' reflectively remarked Mr. Hambly.

'Your mother will never be able to bear the fatigue of entertaining on a large scale; and of course it is your clear duty to entertain. You owe that to your friends, both old and new.'

say, where can we hunt up an eligible young lady in time for the Christmas party, which, of course, he is going to give?' And Mr. Marriott turned gleefully to his two companions. 'Come, I've got an idea; where's to-day's paper? I remember that I had awful fun over it this morning. Do you ever study the matrimonial advertisements? I do, and it's worth the trouble. Now and then there's a gem. Where is it? Now then, listen to this, for instance.'

"Young lady, just out of teens, anxious to secure her own happiness as well as that of some fellow-creature, would be willing to become the wife of a gentleman, even if middle aged, who could give guarantee of a strictly moral character as well as of assured income. Hair and eyes dark, complexion good, height five feet one; rides bicycle (in skirts), and fond of children. Photo sent if required." Now, if that doesn't tempt you I should like to know what will. What can you possibly want more than a young lady just out of her teens, with dark eyes, anxious for your happiness and eschewing bloomers?'

'I prefer blue eyes,' mildly objected the host. 'And five foot one would make conversation a little troublesome when walking, considering the difference of levels.'

'Oh, those are only ideas. Wait till you see the photo! The question is rather whether *you* will come up to the requirements. Let me see. I *think* I can guarantee your moral character, and I know I can your income, and, luckily, she isn't particular about age. I do think this is the finger of Providence, and it would be flying in its face not to send for that photo.'

'I've never been able to make up my mind whether these things are genuine or not,' remarked Mr. Hambly, whom irrepressible laughter was softly rolling from one side of his chair to the other.

'Hoaxes,' uttered the red-haired squire, purple in the face from the same cause.

'Too many of them for that,' decided Mr. Marriott. 'Some of them are, no doubt. Best way of collecting photos that I know of. I recollect perfectly being shown an album—it was on board a man-of-war—choke full of portraits of young ladies—not necessarily very young either—which the officers had collected by means of sham matrimonial advertisements. I do wonder, now, how many albums we'd get together if we put in

the truthful description of our venerable host? I vote we try!’

‘That would be rather ripping, certainly,’ pronounced the still gently convulsed dandy, while the younger man could only manage to utter ‘Glorious,’ in a choking voice.

‘There—hand me a pencil old man, and just see what I’ll make of you. How shall we start? “Amiable and thoroughly domesticated bachelor”——’

‘Can you answer for his being domesticated?’ interpolated Mr. Hambly, whose reserve had thoroughly collapsed by this time. ‘Strikes me he’s been more at home with lions and tigers until quite lately, than with mere women.’

‘We’ll put that in too. “Distinguished sportsman and extensive traveller,” that’s the style of thing; “possessing income of fifteen thousand pounds and fine landed property, and”——ahem—it’s here that some indication as to age ought to come in. What am I to do, Dyson? This is too delicate a point for me to decide on my own responsibility.’

‘Put grey-haired but not decrepit,’ suggested Mr. Dyson, who had left his place by the fire and was beginning to enter into the spirit of the joke.

‘That’s a little too brutal. Let’s say: “No longer in the first flush of youth”—equally true and less prosaic—“wishes to meet with a young lady of cheerful disposition, who feels in herself the vocation to head a large establishment.” Now that *ought* to fetch ’em. This is going to be a grand joke. You’ll let me send it to the *Times* when I’ve copied it out, won’t you? It’ll be no end of fun to hear of the photos arriving, and of course you’ll show them to us next shooting-day.’

‘I don’t believe there will be any to show. You won’t persuade me that anybody will be found to take that style of composition seriously; but you’re welcome to your little joke, if it amuses you.’

‘That’s right. I’ll copy it out first thing to-morrow morning, and post it before you’ve time to change your mind, and meanwhile I’ll follow in Sir Harold’s footsteps, for I too am no longer in the first flush of youth, and confess to feeling those nine miles very plainly in my joints.’

The other two guests likewise inclining bedwards, the room was presently evacuated by all except the host.

He had returned to the fireplace, which on this raw November day no doubt presented irresistible attractions to a

man fresh from the tropics, and, having thrown on a fresh log, stood there with his back to the grate, and a very faint smile visible under the brown moustache. He was looking back on the evening that was passed, and the excellent entertainment it had supplied; not in that matter of the advertisement—to that he gave no further thought, that was just one of Marriott's hare-brained ideas, in which he had only acquiesced because it appeared to him so entirely unimportant—but in the sport afforded by poor Sir Harold's mental struggles. With a few words Mr. Dyson could have calmed the worst of the baronet's alarms had he thought it worth while, but he did not think it so. Perhaps because he was accustomed to a life of excitement, it struck him as more enticing to play the man from the ranks, and to get himself accepted on his own merits, instead of smoothing his own path by the revelation of family particulars, although in truth, and despite his so suspiciously sudden wealth, despite even the shape of his finger-nails, the new possessor of Swanmere had as good blood in him as Sir Harold himself.

His father, the impoverished scion of an ancient county family, had for all patrimony given him the education of a gentleman, and had been dead even before that was quite completed. Reduced practically to his own resources at twenty, and tormented by the desire of coming to hands with Fate, Christopher Dyson had immediately on his father's death left England on the search for Fortune in whichever shape she might present herself, feeling in himself the capacity of doing anything except sitting down to the humdrum existence of an English middle-class life. He had followed the tantalising goddess almost to the uttermost ends of the world, without for very long even coming in sight of her; had lived under many climes, endured many hardships, seen many hopes spring up only to wither as fast as they had sprung, had been a gold digger in California, a travelling agent in Canada, even a pack-carrier on New York quay, and had never despaired through it all, and never ceased to write home to the white-haired mother who awaited his return in fear and trembling, that she must not let her heart sink, for he would certainly conquer in the end.

And in the end he did conquer, although not a day too soon for that ageing waiter at home. Cape diamonds was the shape in which his luck approached him, and so quickly did the tide turn, that within two years he had attained what for sixteen he

had been unable even to get near. Very likely he might have got even further than this, but at the end of those two years he drew himself up and remembered the mother at home, whose evening of life he had sworn to make golden, and, looking about him, had decided that his object was gained. He had wanted to be rich, having always felt in himself the capacity for enjoying riches, but he was not pursued by the ambition of becoming one of the Rothschilds of the world, nor minded to go on toiling at the accumulation of wealth which from henceforward would appear to him superfluous; he would not wait to enjoy the fruits of his toil until he was past the age of distinguishing the taste. So, abandoning his work with the same ease with which he had approached it, he turned his back serenely on the scene of his victory.

The rapidity of the process by which he had become rich prevented his having anything of the typical self-made man about him, anything of the *bourgeois* stamp of the class. He had never been a *bourgeois* in the proper sense of the word; but only a workman, and at the same time a gentleman, although he would always give the impression of being an 'out-door' gentleman, in contradistinction to a drawing-room one. If there was anything to find fault with in his appearance, it would be that it was a trifle more picturesque than one is accustomed to in English drawing-rooms. Both in his movements and in his attitudes there was a something of the liberty learnt under other skies—something as indescribable as it was unmistakable. It was by contact with half-wild nations that he had acquired that commanding glance—in a hundred emergencies of life and death that he had learnt that steadily watchful gaze, that alert carriage of the figure, as though in continual readiness for an emergency.

The first thing was to find a home suitable to his newly acquired wealth, and this was discovered in Swanmere. The next thing, according to his mother, would be to find a wife; indeed, to hear the good lady talk, she had found one already, for Sir Harold's eldest daughter was a distinctly pretty brunette, and Lady Hane at least looked already with very motherly eyes on the new neighbour. Mr. Dyson himself rather liked the girl, and after eighteen storm-tossed years yearned almost passionately for the haven of domesticity, but he begged for time; while Mrs. Dyson, almost in Marriott's words, replied that too much of that had been wasted already, and that surely he was not

going to run the risk of letting her die without having seen her grandchildren.

This last argument was almost convincing, and Miss Hane's eyes were undoubtedly fine ; still, as he had remarked this evening, he preferred blue ones, perhaps because his own were so intensely black, and, do what he would, he could not imagine her moving about these rooms by his side. Perhaps that was only because he knew her too little ; he certainly must get better acquainted, if only to show his goodwill to his mother.

CHAPTER XV.

AFTER THE BATTLE.

ON just such a raw and misty November day as the one on which the Swanmere smoking sanctuary had been reconsecrated, a single person sat alone in the Gilham drawing-room. An empty plate stood on the table, and a few dying coals still glimmered in the grate.

The sensations of the man who has sold the wonderful lamp, or given away the wonderful matchbox, or lost the magic ring, and finds himself plunged back into the misery from which the attendant genii had rescued him, must have borne a close resemblance to those of the Venning sisters on their return to Gilham. Their season of prosperity had been too short and too intense, the return to their former situation too abrupt to correspond to anything but a fairy-tale.

The last weeks in London had failed to bring their altered position fully home to them ; they had been too busy and too feverish for that. The excitement which is the merciful portion of every misfortune, whether big or small, had helped to keep their nerves screwed up to the necessary point. The gradual unveiling of the situation, brought about by the collecting of outstanding bills, the sale of Philippa's horse (at less than half the price given for it) and of such articles as were at all saleable, the general breaking up of the household—all these were occupations enough both mental and physical, and had rendered good service in this distressing time. Added to this there was Miss Amberley to be looked after

that lady having, on the back of the financial catastrophe, entirely collapsed. Not even the prospect of returning to her long-cherished provincial retreat could steady her shaken nerves. Indeed, so intricate is the heart of woman, that certain symptoms pointed to the astonishing conclusion that this retreat had in her eyes lost something of its charm. Was it indeed possible that the insinuating thing called London had managed to inject its poison even into 'Whiskers' elderly nerves?

It was not until they found themselves actually turning into the primitive little approach, called by courtesy an avenue, but in reality a cart-track, and caught sight of the grim little house with the weedy piece of gravel before it and the untrimmed garden hedges peeping out to the right and the left of it, that the truth in all its strength rushed in upon the Venning sisters. It was like one of those nervous shocks that sober a man suddenly after a long period of intoxication. And nothing but a species of mental intoxication could explain the events of the last summer. Philippa, having once thoroughly come to her senses, was the first to acknowledge this. As little as she had been able to see the folly of the resolution formed so lightheartedly in February, so little was she now able to understand the rashness of then. A madness, a brief madness that had begun on the day of the Mayblossom soap and had ended in the private room of the bank in London, that alone could have led to the present situation.

The first duty that seemed to press upon her was the necessity of keeping up her sisters' courage by making the best of things; and this she had been doing ever since their return. The three past months had been one long effort at getting back into the old grooves—alas, not very successfully. It was scarcely credible how, in a few months, the physiognomy of Gilham had altered, how small and mean appeared everything after the bigness of London, how dull and flat after its brilliancy and variety. The drawing-room, once the pride of their hearts, had sunk, by comparison to the one they had lived in all this happy summer, to the level almost of a lumber-room; the studio, in which so many busy and gay hours had been passed, had lost all the picturesque glamour it once possessed. Not even the faintest desire to resume their former occupations stirred within the sisters' breasts; and neither the stormy welcome afforded them by the troop of dogs, nor the

long rambles on the downs could have a permanently cheering effect. These things were just what they used to be, but the high spirits which had turned them into delights were sadly damped, the overflowing vitality toned down by the physical fatigues of the season. Their tastes of worldly pleasures had been too brief to bring satiety ; they had been forced to drop the delightful fruit after only one bite, and everything tasted of dust and ashes after it.

Valiantly though Philippa struggled she did not seem able to lay hold again of her former personality. In vain she reminded herself again and again that they were not really much worse off than they had been before the arrival of that letter in February, and argued that since they had been content then, it must be possible to be content now. The argument would not hold, because between then and now there lay London—London, which they had meant to conquer, but which had conquered them instead, and flung them out of her, so soon as she had no more use for them.

And besides, in point of fact, they were not really in quite the same position as in February, for Evelyn was now gone, and with her her share of the one hundred and twenty pounds income—a vital fall out for Gilham. And she needed her money if possible more even than they did, since she was now struggling to found an existence in London for herself and her husband, who had brought back a touch of fever from the Italian honeymoon, and had been in bad health ever since. Every pound that was to spare had gone that way since summer, but now there was not so much as a superfluous shilling.

And it was not getting easier as the weeks went on, to take up the old life, but, on the contrary, more difficult, as the first fund of courage was gradually drained, while neither from Adela nor Cissy could Philippa look for support in her heavy task. From neither had she heard a word of reproach so far, but she could see clearly what each was undergoing—Adela still and uncomplaining, Cissy irritable and snappish, unsubmitive even to the sisterly authority. With the recollection of other duties had also come the recollection that Cissy's education was not properly finished, but hitherto all attempts to make her re-enter the schoolroom had failed. The premature bringing out and exciting surroundings had evidently given to her immature character a wrong twist, and, to judge

from the growing obstinacy and irritation, threatened to put her on a wrong road altogether. Cissy was the one of her sisters whose character most approached Philippa's own, as the latter now began to discover to her cost, and it is a stamp of character which at moments is apt to become unmanageable.

There had been some difficult moments to go through within the last three months, but until to-day Philippa had succeeded in not letting her courage quite sink. To-day for the first time it seriously faltered. Perhaps it was the dismal weather outside which helped to bring to a climax the sensations which had tormented her since her return ; perhaps also the scent of the fried eggs which still haunted the room—for, in order to save the fire in the dining-room, meals were taken here nowadays — served to accentuate the dismalness of things in general. But there was a more serious ground for Philippa's depression than either the weather or the fried eggs ; for upstairs in her little attic room Adela lay in bed with hot cheeks and a noisy breath, that seemed to portend something serious coming. It might be only influenza, but it might also be bronchitis, the doctor had said to-day. She had appeared to droop since their return from London, either in consequence of the fatigues of the season, or else because of the want of the excitement attendant upon those fatigues, or simply because the once accustomed atmosphere of discomfort had become too unbearable. Whichever the reason, she was not in the state which resists illness, and—fires having to be sparingly lit—had succumbed to the first bad chill. Philippa had been sitting beside her all the afternoon, and had come away for half an hour now, in order to eat her supper, leaving Cissy in her place.

The supper, such as it was, had been eaten, and, with the plate pushed to one side, Philippa, huddled in a shawl—for the room was anything but warm—sat and stared into the grate, trying to gain an outline of the present situation. Adela was going to be ill—that much was certain, probably even seriously ill, and in the best of cases there would be doctors' bills and medicines, and possibly a change of air prescribed, and fires would henceforward have to be kept up better. That was clear, and she had not yet answered Evelyn's last urgent appeal for money, simply because she dared not.

The opening of the door startled Philippa out of her gloomy reverie.

'Is Adela asleep?' she asked of the entering Cissy.

Cissy walked to the fireplace without immediately answering.

'Surely you have not left her alone?'

'Do you take me for a baby?' said Cissy sharply. 'Of course—Fanny is with her. Why do you let the fire go out? Do you want us all to catch cold like Adela?'

'I wanted to get the coals to last till Saturday,' said Philippa, almost humbly. 'You see, so long as the real cold doesn't set in—'

'But this is worse than it used to be!' burst out Cissy irrepressibly. 'When we went to London in the spring you told us that even if our experiment failed we should not be worse off than we were before; but it seems it wasn't true.'

'I am afraid not, Cissy.'

'Then, why did we go?'

'You wanted to go, Cissy.'

'I? How could I know what I was talking about? You were never tired of telling me that I was a baby; how could a baby decide a matter like that? You never listened to me unless you wanted to, and you did just want that time, that's all. It's not because *we* wanted, but because *you* wanted to go to London that we went; you know you could have kept us from going if you had cared. Why, Adela did not want at all at first, but you talked and talked until you had proved to her ever so clearly that there was no risk in the whole thing. *She* was the sensible one, when really it ought to have been you, since you were supposed to have charge of us.'

Cissy finished within her pale eyes shining in her pale face and with her small, thin hands clenched convulsively at her sides. For long she had required an opportunity of venting the bitterness within her—on whom or how did not greatly matter—and to-day, with the force of an eruption, it had freed itself. With quickened breath she stood opposite to her sister, strung up for the retort, which of course must be coming; but to her astonishment, almost consternation, there was no answer. Philippa, the vehement, the authoritative, whose spirit, as a rule, was as easily stung as the flank of a high-mettled horse, whose glance under attack could become so lightning-like, sat now before her, her chin sunk on her breast, her lips not framing even a word of defence. What Cissy said was far too like what she had been saying to herself

for the past three months to be resented ever so faintly, however hard the words might hit.

'Am I right or wrong?' asked Cissy, with rather less assurance.

For all answer Philippa covered her face with her hands. But the very first sobbing breath was too much for Cissy. She had seen her elder sister cry so rarely that it affected her almost as though she had seen a man cry. Before even Philippa had found her handkerchief, the younger sister was on her knees beside her, convulsively enclosing her in her slight arms.

'Phil, Phil, for Heaven's sake don't do that !' she implored almost in a shriek. 'That is not what I meant. Of course we're all to blame ; don't make yourself unhappy—not more unhappy than necessary, I mean ; you meant it all right, and it was only our bad luck that spoilt everything ; ah, please forgive me and do stop sobbing, or else I'll have to begin too !'

It was a few minutes before Philippa could speak, but when she succeeded her words came with a certain degree of calmness that startled Cissy almost as much as the tears had done.

'There isn't anything to forgive, Cissy ; you haven't told me anything that I didn't know already, only that to hear it put into words seems to make it more distinct, somehow. But you're wrong about our all being to blame, it is only I—I alone ; and therefore it is I who must find a way out of it somehow. I don't quite know where to look for it yet, but I must think. If you will go back to Adela now for half an hour more, I will begin to think at once ; you can sit up for another half-hour, can't you ? and then I'll come up for the night.'

She had freed herself very gently from Cissy's arms as she spoke, and Cissy, awed by something new in her sister's manner, and mechanically falling back into the ancient habit of obedience, rose without a word and did as she was bid.

Alone once more, Philippa resolutely pocketed her handkerchief and struggled to regain composure before mounting to the sick-room. The last illusion in her mind was fallen. Fully, humbly, with bitter self-reproach, and with self accusations far more vehement than anything that Cissy had said, she acknowledged not only that she was guilty, but that she

was guilty alone. Moderation, whether on the right or the wrong side, never had been Philippa's attribute, and once having fully grasped her fault, she would hear of no extenuation. The fact of both Evelyn and Cissy having warmly supported her could no longer count in her eyes; the new sense of guilt was too keen to admit the existence of accomplices. They were not accomplices, they were victims, and she alone was the injurer.

Raising her head after a few agonised minutes, she encountered the gaze of a pair of mild blue eyes, watching her from the wall opposite, from out of a frame of acorns and cones.

In her present mood she could read nothing but reproach in that gaze. She knew what those eyes meant. Had she not promised her dying mother to be the stay and support of her sisters, their second mother? and was this the way she had fulfilled her promise? Groaning, she covered her face once more; that gaze over there weighed too heavily to be borne.

'Oh, for a way to make it good again!' she uttered within herself. 'Oh, for some means of gaining—of making money for them, only enough money to help Adela to get well and to send to Evelyn! Is there no way, no way at all?'

The only way that suggested itself was the Wheelers' debt, still unpaid, although in her despair Philippa had more than once openly pressed her claim. But the Wheelers were paying visits in another part of England, and in answer to her letter Philippa had received a short and chilly note, in which Mrs. Wheeler had expressed the most naïve astonishment at the claim, and requested to see something in writing on the subject. As nothing in writing had passed, Philippa decided that the matter must rest until the family returned home. Maggie, of course, would not be able to deny the truth when taxed with it; but the Wheelers' return was distant and indefinite, and meanwhile events pressed on all sides.

Economise further? How was it possible without starving? Gain money? How? By working in the fields? If Philippa had thought it would do the rest of them any good she would not at this time have hesitated to take either hoe or spade in hand.

'But if I can't dig I might at least cook,' she reflected desperately. 'Fanny's wages are £15 a year, and she's another mouth to feed. Why should I not be able to do what she does? I am very strong, and I'll learn to cook

properly in time. When Adela gets well again I really think I'll give her warning. And then there are the animals. We can't do without Bobbin, I'm afraid.' 'Bobbin' was the donkey. 'And I'm afraid nobody would buy our dogs; no, I don't see my chance there, but Fanny must certainly go.'

A few minutes later Philippa, bending over Adela's bed, met the patient gaze of a pair of feverishly bright eyes. Despite the heavy and evidently painful breathing, she managed to smile up into her sister's face and to assure her hoarsely that she felt 'quite comfortable.'

For the second time that evening Philippa was in danger of breaking down. That patient smile was ten times harder to bear than Cissy's wild reproaches. No, the sacrifice of Fanny would not be enough; something else must be done, something that would make a real, substantial difference, that would give them money enough to make Adela not only get well but also keep so, to take her, if necessary, to a warmer place for the winter. But what, and how? The question pursued her into the uneasy snatches of slumber, which was all she was able to indulge in during her night on the sofa.

CHAPTER XVI.

A GARDEN INTERVIEW.

WHAT and how? The thought was still with her as with aching head she stumbled down the staircase in the uncertain morning light. On the table in the little lobby there still lay yesterday's papers, which nobody had had the time to open. Philippa's quick eyes, busy on their new quest, fell straight upon them, and instantly spied a possible retrenchment.

'What do we need papers for, I wonder?' she reflected bitterly; 'we don't belong to the world any longer, so it can't matter to us what the world is doing. This must be put a stop to at once. It's a bore the subscription having been paid for a year, but I daresay we shall find somebody to take the *Lady's Star* and the *Times* off our hands.'

Perhaps it was exactly the resolution thus formed that pushed Philippa, even as she formed it, to tear the bands off the papers she held. If their reign was to be of such short

duration, it might be as well to get whatever enjoyment out of them that was to be got.

There was nothing to do for the moment but await the arrival of the doctor ; and so, sitting down in the same easy chair in which she had spent her evening yesterday, and still with the same empty plate at her elbow—for the requirements of the sick-room had a naturally disorganising effect upon Fanny's arrangements—Philippa began idly to turn over the printed pages. Social doings were but scantily represented at this season, and politics seemed too far away to be real. The review of a novel she had read last summer caught her eye for a moment, but it was hard to keep her mind to any consecutive subject, and presently she found herself listlessly reading the advertisements ; they at least required no mental effort, and they were sometimes amusing, especially the personal ones.

'Amiable and thoroughly domesticated bachelor'—ah, that was one of the matrimonial ones, over which they had all had many a good laugh last summer. 'Fifteen thousand pounds income and fine landed property—wishes to meet a young lady of cheerful disposition and feeling in herself the vocation to head a large establishment.'

Would he meet her ? Philippa wondered. Did marriages ever really come off in consequence of such announcements as this ? She supposed they must, else why should they so persistently reappear ? Fifteen thousand pounds a year ! She fell to musing. What an almost inconceivable lot of money that was ! To think that there were people so rolling in wealth, while she was put to for five pounds to get Adela the beef-tea and the wine she would presently be requiring ! Why, oh why could she not lay hands on a tiny portion of that wealth ? And the person who successfully answered the advertisement would have it all, and probably she needed it much less than Philippa and her sisters did. Would there actually be such a person, and would she feel able to enjoy the wealth acquired by so degrading a step ? What could it possibly feel like to marry a man whom you had met through a newspaper advertisement ? And yet, how beautifully simple in its way ! Oh, for the barefacedness of some people, for the unblushing courage to throw all illusions to the wind, and frankly to make a mercenary marriage ! But although Philippa in this moment passionately envied the woman who could do this

thing, it never occurred to her that she could by any possibility do it herself. For that she was not yet quite desperate enough.

‘Probably it is some elderly *parvenu* who is not accustomed to society, and prefers to make a business matter of it,’ she reflected with a lingering curiosity. “Vocation to head a large establishment!”—yes, that might tally; and I think my disposition certainly tends to the cheerful, so long as there is even the smallest thing to be cheerful about. What a goose I am!’ she interrupted her own reflections; ‘of course I would rather be flayed alive than do it.’ And turning to another column she had soon forgotten all about the amiable and domesticated bachelor in the interest of an article on woman’s work—a subject which seemed to lie much closer to her own interests.

But the doctor was long in coming, and after the stuffy atmosphere of the sick-room, Philippa’s aching head was asking loudly for the open air. It is true that the morning was not particularly inviting, but at least it was not raining, and not very much colder out of doors than in; so presently, with her shawl around her, she wandered out into the garden behind the house, and began slowly pacing one of the paths between the straight hedges that stood at right angles to each other, like so many screens, dividing off the garden into separate and equally ill-kept bits. Owing to their sheltered position and to the number of withered leaves that still clung to the branches, and owing also to their unclipped state, these screens were not quite transparent yet, and the morning mist which still rolled between them helped to wrap everything but the nearest stretch of path in a species of damp mystery. The uncut grass, soaked by the autumn rains, lay on the top of each other in flattened yellow masses, choking up certain round and oblong patches which had probably once been flower-beds. The creeping weeds on the path were yellow too by this time, and exceedingly limp, while the climbing ones—those that had invaded the hedge—were brown, and, having withered at the stalk, had left clumps of leaves and tendrils, lodged high up among the twigs of the blackthorn, and looking like so many bundles of old rags carried there by the wind. The thin and once elegant summer dress which Philippa now trailed listlessly along the damp paths, seemed pitifully out of keeping with this forlorn and wintry garden.

By its thinness, as well as its decayed smartness—a smartness now sadly frayed at the hem and thin at the elbows—it seemed just now the monument not only of a defunct season but also of a dead splendour.

Philippa had taken only two turns down the central path when the long expected sound of wheels reached her ears. The doctor at last ! And being at this moment at the extreme end of the garden, she hurried her steps towards the house. There were several corners to turn, and before she got to the last of them she heard steps on the other side of one of the untidy screens, and a moment later she almost ran against an advancing figure.

‘Evelyn !’ she cried, standing still abruptly and unable for surprise to say more.

The name had come instinctively to her lips, but, having said it, she looked again more keenly at the face before her, as though asking herself whether this was indeed Evelyn.

It was not much more than three months since she had seen her sister, but even for three years the difference would have been too great. And it was not only that she looked older, quite half a dozen years older than on that July day on which she had so shyly and yet so proudly announced her marriage, but also that she had become plainer than Philippa had imagined that her sister could ever become. The freshness which had redeemed from heaviness her somewhat square features was gone, wiped away by some force outside herself ; a new line of hardness showed about the mouth, a new shade of sullenness in the unquiet eyes. This was not the face of an eighteen-year-old girl, but of a haggard and half desperate woman. Without knowing that she did it, Philippa instinctively took a half step backward, as though recoiling before this unknown person into which Evelyn had turned. It was terror rather than pleasure that she felt at sight of this so strangely unfamiliar sister.

‘I am changed, am I not ?’ said Evelyn in an unpleasantly hard voice. ‘I would have telegraphed to prepare you, but there was no money left.’

‘Have you come because of Adela ?’ asked Philippa, the wild idea shooting through her mind that it was the doctor who had surreptitiously sent for Evelyn.

‘Adela ? No ; what’s the matter with her ?’

'She's very ill ; it may be bronchitis, the doctor says. I am expecting him every minute.'

'Really ? I am sorry,' said Evelyn, in that same blunt, almost indifferent tone. 'But it is not about Adela I have come, it is about myself. Look here, Philippa, I want that money I wrote about ; you didn't answer my last letter, and so I thought it would be simpler to fetch it myself.'

'But I haven't got it !' cried Philippa, with a new feeling of terror upon her. 'I would have sent it long ago if I had had it.'

'If you haven't got it you must get it, or help me to get it, for I must have it ; do you hear ? I must. Something has absolutely got to be done, and at once, at once ! Do you know where Ralph is at this moment ? On board the *Sea Swallow*. He sailed from Plymouth yesterday. It seemed the only way not to die of hunger. You know he has an uncle in Canada—or perhaps you don't know. I was quite against the idea at first, I felt so sure that I should manage to get work for us both in London, and just at first I had some orders for copies, but Ralph needed so much nursing after his Italian fever that I couldn't keep up my work, and he doesn't seem able to shake it off somehow, especially with so little to eat, and at last the doctor gave me such a fright that I forgot everything else and just packed him off—all alone, since there wasn't enough for either Lucy or me to go with him. That's what I've come about—the passage money, for of course I must follow immediately.'

She broke off, looking hard at Philippa, but Philippa could not speak at once. She was still busy studying her sister's changed appearance ; the shadow under the cheekbones, even the loose set of the cloak told her more than the words themselves, although these fell like so many blows upon her.

'He won't be much more than an overseer there, of course,' went on Evelyn, 'for it's quite a small farm, but at least there will be enough to eat. By the bye, do you know what it feels like *not* to have enough to eat ? I don't mean having to pinch, and be content with eggs instead of meat, or water instead of wine, but the real, genuine article, with nothing in the house, and no more courage to face the butcher, and going to bed at eight o'clock in order to save supper ? Have you come to that yet ? I have, and it's made me discover a lot of things, and one of them is that nothing, nothing, nothing, not even

my love of Art and not even my love for Ralph—and they are both real enough, God knows—are worth the experience. And that's why I've thrown everything to the winds. It's the end of my dream, of course,' she said, with a sudden, tearless sob in her voice, 'my second dream, for the first was smashed up by my marriage, and I have nothing remaining now but Ralph. I've racked my brain to pieces to find an alternative; it's in pieces already, I think, but the alternative won't come.'

'Sit down a little while we talk it out,' was the first thing Philippa said as Evelyn ceased speaking, and she said it with all her old peremptoriness. Evelyn was beginning to tremble, as she could not help noticing, and understood at once that it was not the chilliness of the air which was making her teeth shake against each other and the handle of her umbrella rattle between her fingers. A moss-eaten garden bench stood at only two steps' distance, and thither Evelyn followed her sister in silence. It was evident that she was struggling hard against a complete break-down. With averted face she picked the dead leaves from off a twig close at hand, and Philippa too was silent, feeling that they both required a little space in which to steady their nerves.

'You will get me the passage money, won't you?' asked Evelyn almost humbly at last. 'Isn't there anything remaining that could be sold? If I had a single thing, a single jewel remaining I never would torture you like this, for of course I know that I am torturing you, but I've made everything into money that I could, even my clothes. If it wasn't for this cloak being so mercifully long I don't know how I should have travelled down. Look!' and undoing the buttons she exhibited to her sister's eyes a black skirt visibly patched, and—ah, depth of degradation! not even with black. 'You can't sink much lower than that, can you? I have done all I can; it is only you now who can do something.'

'Yes, of course; it is only I,' said Philippa slowly. 'It was my fault it ever came to this, so of course it is my business to set it right again. Cissy told me so yesterday, and now you——'

'No, I have not told you so. It wasn't to accuse you or anybody that I came here; that is not my way, though it may be Cissy's. I know very well that one can't eat one's cake and have it, and I ate my share quite as greedily as you did. I have no rights, no grievances, but only wants, pressing wants,

and there's no other mortal person I could think of turning to but you. I must have money, Phil, I *must*, and you must find out where to get it from. Think of Ralph landing alone in Canada, ill perhaps, and in want of nursing. You always were the one for emergencies, you know ; ah, can't you do something now ?'

'Yes, it is quite clear that I must do something,' said Philippa, with far more assurance than she felt, aware principally of the necessity of calming Evelyn by any means that came to hand. There was a wildness in her sister's eyes that suggested all sorts of possibilities to Philippa's excited brain. Evelyn always was unaccountable in her resolutions and prompt in her actions ; everything that could save her from a possibly rash act must be done. And therefore Philippa, though with despair in her own heart, managed to bring a species of smile to her lips as she pressed her sister's cold fingers.

'I cannot give you the money to-day,' she found herself presently saying, 'but I will do something ; I certainly will do something. We will consult—and of course you will stay here meanwhile, until the money is got somehow. Ah, there is the doctor at last !'

'The doctor ?'

'Yes, for Adela ; I told you ——'

'To be sure, I quite forgot,' said Evelyn candidly.

(*To be continued.*)

WOMEN OF OTHER NATIONS.

IV.—ITALY.

ITALY, 'the woman of the nations,' as Byron calls her. Can any country compare with her in the long array of noble daughters who sweep through the chambers of the Past? Roman matrons, empresses, citizens, the ladies of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance—Beatrice, the 'heavenly influence' of Italy's great singer; the beautiful Battista Sforza, virtuous and learned, wife of the good Duke of Urbino; Elisabeth Gonzaga and Isabella d'Este, Isotta di Rimini, and Catherine Sforza, the strong woman who governed her province and her army; the wise and saintly Catherine of Siena; Vittoria Colonna, the noble friend of Michael Angelo. Famous too for culture and learning, Hortensia, daughter of the celebrated orator Hortensius, who by her eloquence defeated the proposition of the Roman senate to levy a severe war tax upon Roman ladies; a professor in the fifteenth century at Brescia, a philosopher at Padua; Novella d'Andrea, filling a chair of the canon law; Gaetana Agnesi, the profoundness of whose learning was only equalled by the goodness of her heart. In the struggle for United Italy, it was not only Anita, Garibaldi's devoted wife, who sacrificed her life for her country; others did as much, and gave those dearest to them to the cause; and whenever the demand has been made upon them the women of Italy have shown themselves equal to it. To-day there are to be found courageous women, ready to come forward to arouse public feeling on behalf of their sex; and though they are working quietly, their influence is making itself felt.

Education in Italy to-day is under the rod of the Minister of Public Instruction, a functionary who is always changing rules and regulations according to his particular fancy or fad, and who inclines rather pre-eminently to that red-tapeism

that runs through every Italian institution. The scheme of national education can hardly be dignified by that name. Education is supposed to be compulsory, but there are not enough schools for the population, and a short time ago the country contained 68 per cent. of illiterates. Napoleon I. erected a girls' college at Milan, and between 1822 and 1830 the Austrian Government organised fourteen intermediate and 1,044 primary girls' schools. In 1859 these primary schools were confided to female teachers, but these are miserably paid ; and while there are not enough schools for the children, there are not enough teachers for the schools. There are now intermediate schools to be found in Verona, Milan, Florence, Palermo, and Naples, and in almost every provincial capital is a state school for training teachers. In Rome and Florence are superior normal schools with scholarships for women ; and in at least one of these the experiment of co-education of the sexes is being tried. A large number of private schools are to be found in the provinces, especially in Lombardy ; but in none of these Government high schools—gymnasias, lyceums, universities, by whatever name you call them—is the education of the first rank, or such as the modern world demands. Religious educational associations are forbidden in theory, practically they flourish ; and those of the upper-class families who are not educated at home with an inferior English or French governess, to whom they rarely pay more than £40 a year, are sent to convents. In the middle classes many young girls on leaving school go to the State training-schools for teachers, and of the 2,000 who graduate annually from these schools, at least two-fifths do not intend to become teachers, but are the daughters of well-to-do parents studying to improve their own minds. The universities have been thrown open to women, but there is a lack of competent professors, and the course of training is defective in nearly every department. There are no universities specially for women. It is the same with schools of art ; and this is very detrimental to girls' opportunities of study, as the number of parents is limited who will send their daughters to mix indiscriminately with young men. *Kassandra Vivaria*, a young Italian writer of noble family, gives a picture of the convent life of girls at the present time, which is worth transcribing.

'The teaching,' she says, 'is the usual nondescript union of general notions, dominated by sacred history, religious

instruction and French grammar ; the moral tone a compound of meanness and scruple. . . .

'Throughout the community there reigned a spirit of pettiness and excitement over trifles, of opposition to anything that could bring personality into light ; an eagerness to check every display of feeling. . . . The sulky and passionate subjects were treated alike ; the sensitive and the blunt-edged girl reproached in the same tone ; the idle and the stupid brain tormented in exactly the same manner ; the impertinent and the simply irrepressible alike put down. There was one mould for all ; one hard, deep, narrow mould into which those twenty-seven young hearts had to be forced, regardless of their primitive size and shape. It was no violence or ill-usage that did the work (the Sisters of St. Maria would have considered their souls lost had they been guilty of losing their temper, and of now and again administering a sound box on the ear) ; it was the dogged indifference, the prejudiced elevation of eyebrows, the patient, daily repetition of the same reproof in the same tone, with the same bad mark ; the incredulous laugh at displays of enthusiasm over any but saintly subjects ; the weak, steady, paltry prevention of honest endeavour ; the abhorrent repulsion of everything that savoured of a new idea ; a slow, deadening, miserable process that unnerved the strongest and dulled the quickest. Many of the girls carried away with them when they left a satirical laugh for things religious, and one only desire : to have a good time after years of repression. . . . Among them was the unhealthy young ascetic, who deprived herself of food and sleep to practise Holy Penance, and kept a journal of her soul's progress ; and the romantic young ape who was despairingly in love with the grave, handsome priest engaged for the Thursday's Mass, and wrote verses about him. There was the child who could do no wrong, because the third cousin of her aunt had married a cousin of the Pope ; and the kind, clever girl who could do no right, because her father was a member of Parliament. Girls there were who wrote imaginary love-letters instead of learning Comba's "Geographia" ; others whose diary and record of their daily faults took up all their energy ; some who had Monier's Catechism on their desks, and Stecchetti's voluptuous "Postuma" in their laps. Some said their rosary in preparation time ; while by far the greater number stared at their tasks, and neither learned, thought, nor attempted anything.'

Some will say that this picture is over-coloured ; but we find another well-known thinker on education writing that the hope of better things will come for women when the aristocracy of Italy cease to send their daughters to convents. Yet another speaks of the houses of the *Sacré Cœur*, where 'young girls are taught reading, writing, and religion, good manners, antiquated hygienic laws, and a righteous horror of everything modern.'

The north of Italy is far in advance of the south, and differs from it in social customs and popular prejudices. In the central part, which was under the dominion of the Popes, the priests even now concentrate all their efforts to keep women under their control, and do their best to discourage what we understand by the higher education. In the north the means of culture are more freely offered. Some enlightened Italian ladies have founded a professional school in Milan to give scientific and industrial training, and every year finds more students at the universities. Here and there attempts are made to improve the minds of girls by lectures. There is an old society in Rome where weekly lectures are given—usually on ancient history. Fashionable ladies go because the Queen does, but the ideas are superannuated, and political, social, and legal questions are carefully excluded. Some years ago Professor Gubernatis started some original and noteworthy lectures for women in Florence, but no one of high place would take them up or recognise the question of women's development.

The mass of the upper and upper middle classes are very poor. On what do they live ? On the income of some small estate, by letting several floors of the palace ; sometimes a friend lives with them and shares the expense. As the girls grow up they have but one hope, one desire—to marry. Romantic marriages are still made in Italy. A young man stations himself in sight of the windows day after day, follows the object of his admiration in the decorous walks which she takes with her mother, she perfectly aware of his pursuit, however apparently unconscious ; then he gets an introduction, and presently declares himself, through the medium of an aunt or a friend of the family. Dowries are indeed indispensable, but such very small sums are considered to constitute a dowry, sometimes not more than 1,000 francs. If there are several sisters, and the family can only scrape

together one dowry, it is assigned to the elder sister, who marries, and the younger ones resign themselves with what philosophy they may to dress St. Catherine's hair. Marriages are made for love, but the Italian girl is ready to love anybody who presents himself in the light of a possible husband. The life of a young girl of the middle class is very dull ; as she can never go out without an escort, she often only walks once or twice a week. She travels little, even in her own country—perhaps no further than the mountains or a seaside resort a few miles off. Her chief excitement consists in sauntering up and down the principal street and attracting the attention of the young men who stand at the door of club or *café*. When a woman has achieved matrimony, her overweening desire is for male children—a wish which perhaps is rooted in hereditary traditions of old Roman days. In her early house-keeping life the young wife of the middle class goes out early to market, important with jingling keys and attended by her maid ; then she comes back, resumes her somewhat untidy attire, and superintends the cooking of her husband's dinner. She never drives or walks alone, but always with her husband, and is further habitually attended by the husband's best friend. This curious fashion, which is almost universal, is a survival of the old story of the *cicisbeo*, but nowadays, in nine cases out of ten, there is no harm in it whatever. The 'best friend' looks after the lady, gives her intimate advice about her health, prevents her eating too many ices, and supplies her with unlimited bonbons. Her chief pleasure consists in being taken once or twice a week to the *café* or the theatre, and on Sunday for a drive, if possible with a pair of horses. Driving is the favourite occupation of all classes in Italy. In the south all the population of a town seems to rush into carriages of one sort or another at sundown, and to drive furiously up and down the Chiaja, or public promenade. When a child is born to an Italian household the event causes the wildest excitement. Every relation within hail gathers together. Grandparents, uncles, and maiden aunts cluster round the cradle. The proud father and the 'best friend' rush hither and thither, sending messages. Telegrams without number are despatched to distant relatives, to officers in far-off garrison towns, and endless congratulations are received. As they grow up children are very much spoiled. They are always *en évidence*, and their tastes and caprices are studied in a way which surprises the

dispassionate looker-on. The Italian woman is before all things a wife and mother. '*Io sono tutta per la famiglia*' ('I exist only for my family'), she will exclaim, with conscious pride, as if the idea was both new and admirable, and indeed it is not easy to arouse her interest in anything outside the domestic circle. The girls are seldom out of their mother's sight. They walk out, one beside her, the other two in front, not behind, lest they should exchange indiscreet glances with passers-by. The apartments occupied by the *bourgeoisie*, commercial and official, are very often composed of a great many rooms—a large and small dining-room, a boudoir or dressing-room attached to every bedroom. One great feature of the homes of Italy is space. The rooms will be furnished with quantities of mirrors and chandeliers and pictures in imposing frames, but as a contrast there will be no flowers or books or easy chairs, but ugly sacred images, groups of wax flowers, and wool mats. Very likely only one servant is kept at a wage of twenty francs a month. Every one dresses very smartly; the toilettes of the daughters are the great expense of the house. Very shabby, almost squalid clothes are worn at home, but on Sundays and *fête* days the whole family, dressed in their best, go to Mass and walk in the public gardens. As soon as the mistress of a house can achieve a *salon* sufficiently well furnished, she has a 'day,' receives visits and returns them, in the evening for choice. The daughters share with their mothers the superintendence of domestic cares and household duties, and concoct toilettes with their maid. Every girl has lovers, of whom she boasts to her girl friends, and there are clandestine meetings, at church or at evening parties, which are peculiarly attractive to the nature of the Italian girl. Her end and aim, however, is to marry, and on the whole all are comparatively free from that romantic sentimentalism which we are still apt to connect with Italy. Italians in the upper ranks have much gay and simple society for young people. The guests come in high dresses, and there is dancing and singing, with *limonata*, coffee and cakes for refreshments. People walk to and fro in fine weather, and these are merely evening calls.

In the upper classes there is much luxury and a great deal of hospitality, but it would seem a dull society to many of us. The circles are small even in the largest towns, and the same people meet and re-cross perpetually. The ladies sit at home and receive gentlemen visitors every evening. The same come

again and again ; they sit round in circles. Titles and distinctions are never forgotten. There is no attempt at serious conversation. Men and women gossip, talk scandal, and laugh heartily at jokes which to a bystander scarcely merit a smile. When in the hot summer months the households migrate to Rimini or Leghorn, or the lakes and mountain resorts, all the circle goes too, and the same gatherings, with the selfsame guests and topics of conversation, begin all over again, never wearying of the same phrases, the same terms, the same subjects. Except among the few rich who are able to satisfy their luxurious tastes, we find a want of the essential comforts of life, side by side with an immoderate desire to *seem* ; to spend on what makes a show. The furniture is a mixture of worn-out antique and tasteless modern, the bedrooms very bare ; every *lire* is haggled over with the struggling tradespeople ; but the outlay least grudged is for toilettes for going to Mass, for driving, for ceremonies, and Cardinals' receptions, for *fêtes* given by the head of the family, who may be a prince of the Church or State. An Italian family will almost stint the necessities of life in a corner of the bare *palazzo*, but will contrive to have a smart carriage with prancing horses and well-dressed men-servants, *per far figura* before the world.

Italian women have little physical activity ; they do not care for outdoor sports ; if they go to races, it is only to exhibit their toilettes. They are not fond of lawn tennis or golf or riding, though a certain number bicycle in the public gardens ; but on the other hand they live constantly in the open air ; they have a great dislike to hot rooms, often having no fires, even in the depth of winter. They eat very simple food, little meat, and a great deal of pasta and fruit, and they have habitually excellent health. Families live together in a patriarchal manner ; several sons with their wives and children will inhabit suites of apartments in the family *palazzo*, meeting at dinner, and on the whole getting on well, though with interludes of violent quarrels. All the rich people, and others who are not rich, but who sacrifice everything to make a show, have an opera box, and the ladies have their 'day' at the opera. If the box is lent to a friend, she is at home to all her acquaintance, and these count as visits of ceremony. Calls and card-leaving absorb an immense amount of time : visits of condolence, visits of ceremony and congratulation, cards on — ival, more at leaving. There is a great deal of 'paper

hospitality,' and the observance is punctilious in the extreme.

The woman who fails to marry has a terribly dull time. She remains always blindly obedient to her father or brother, and never regards herself as a free human being. She is probably terribly poor, but only in very exceptional instances would she assert her own individuality. A friend who knows Italy well describes a typical family. Two daughters, with no beauty and no dowry, they cannot make middle-class marriages, because somewhere or other there is a count in the family. They walk out with their mother day by day, in their best clothes, which are changed as soon as they get back to the house. The mother dies, and the girls, growing faded and elderly, walk out still, always with a companion. One of the sisters dies, and the other is left, dreadfully poor, living in a tiny apartment, hugging her *scaldino*¹ by herself. At last she is given the care of the lamps of the church, and it is to be hoped that this task fills her life and satisfies her stunted expectations. A woman submits entirely to her husband, whom she regards as absolute master of body and soul. Every idea of her claim to individuality would be unintelligible. 'It is commonly believed in Italy,' writes an Italian, 'that woman is morally, intellectually, and physically inferior to man, that she cannot stand by herself, nor presume to be respected or considered if she is not supported by his protection.'

They are very devout Catholics. Those whose husbands are not bound by ties of official interest to the Government, usually incline to the Black, or Church party. They perform their religious duties scrupulously, often communicate twice a week, go every day to Mass, very often count on the help of some *monsignore* who will help them, when the time comes, to marry off the daughter. Each is placed under the protection of a saint, who inspires the greatest devotion; they have little esteem for the saint of another. Superstition is not lacking; women of the world have '*carnets d'indulgences*,' pocket-books in which they keep an account of the indulgences they obtain. One young lady has been described who kept hers on her boudoir table, and allowed her friends to examine it. Every time she gained an indulgence or remission of purgatory she inscribed the date, the reason, and the number of days gained. At the foot of each page she added up the

¹The earthen pot filled with hot embers, which in economical households takes the place of a fire.

days and carried them forward. By the time she was twenty-two she had gained 103 years, 7 months, and 12 days, and said naïvely that as she grew older she expected to be able to make more important additions, and quite counted on gaining five hundred years, which would save her entirely from the horrors of purgatory and give her free access into paradise.

Flirtation and the discussion of love in all its aspects is as engrossing an occupation nowadays, as exciting a pastime as in the days when Castiglione chronicled the doings of the Court of Love in the ducal halls of Urbino. Contemporary novelists give us such pictures as that of the beautiful blonde Contessa Beatrice di Santemifa, with her green eyes and her enigmatic smile, spying the clever journalist, the spoiled and petted darling of the great ladies of Rome, in a fashionable confectioner's in the morning hours. 'She knew he was the chronicler of female elegance, the deifier of female beauty, so she posed for him, half closing her clear emerald eyes, and smiling as she nibbled her cakes.' But, with the exception of the element which exists in every society, Italian women are rarely corrupt in the strict sense of the word, though they may not be high moralists, or cherish a very grand or noble ideal of life.

The woman of the educated classes has not much place as yet as a worker in society; those who obtain degrees practise in the medical profession, and might do much good, but prejudice is very strong against them; the highest public position they can fill is in educational work, and in this as the principal of the smaller Government schools; but teachers are wretchedly paid, at the very best not getting more than £200 a year. A certain number occupy posts in telegraph or telephone offices, but their presence is not very favourably regarded. A fairly large number are now earning their living as writers. Publishers pay them very badly, giving from £20 to £60 for a book, and often making large profits, but they are doing good work, portraying the life around them with Italian grace and passion, and teaching women to think and to recognise the needs of modern times. Changes are slowly coming over public opinion with regard to the education of women; for some years past there has been a growing demand for their practical education, such as will open more lucrative careers, and make it possible for girls to stand alone in the world and to support themselves.

One or two women's papers, notably *La Donna*, a journal published in Bologna, has done much to bring the demands of women before the public. In 1886 a law was passed which gave a widow the control of her children; a wife can also obtain it in the absence of her husband, and a married woman can in certain cases secure the management and possession of her personal property. In marriage, the capital of her *dot* belongs to the wife, but the husband has the interest and controls the expenditure. Should he divert the interest from his family, a law of separation of property exists, independent of separation of persons. In the event of a complete separation the husband must return the dowry. If there is no settlement the wife retains the entire control of her property, but she cannot sell or mortgage without the husband's consent to the deed. Daughters share equally with sons in their parents' fortune, and wives share equally with their children, and neither can be disinherited.

Altogether the Italian woman of the educated classes is at a disadvantage among the workers of society. The competition of men for the most insignificant posts is one of the principal obstacles to the employment of women. Some women of business are to be met in Milan and in Piedmont, of which they have the saying, 'Country beautiful, women ugly.' It was in Milan that the earliest professional school was founded, some twenty years ago, by several distinguished ladies, who felt that the real key to the independence of women was to be found in a training which would make self-support possible. The establishment of agricultural schools has been much discussed, and a lady was sent to France lately to study those of that country. Signora Zampini Salazar, a lady of fine culture and wide views, who has travelled in America with an official appointment to inquire into industrial institutions, gave an interesting account at the Chicago Exhibition of the efforts which are being made in the northern provinces to establish associations with the view of promoting women's progress. For some seven years past ladies have been working in unison in Bologna, at Forti, and in other northern towns to help their fellow-women in time of need. Among the societies started is the Work and Help Society, founded about five years ago by a brilliant young professor, Angelo Celli, who succeeded in interesting a number of ladies under Queen Margherita in the fate of poor women struggling for work.

Some of the more earnest women have written papers and got up lectures to try to inspire the younger ones of the upper ranks to take an interest in social work, but the division of classes is very great. The aristocracy are selfish, engrossed by their own poverty and the difficulty of keeping up appearances. In some great emergency—such as the unfortunate Abyssinian war—ladies will come forward and exert themselves to raise money by bazaars and concerts, but it is not easy to arouse or sustain any strong feeling for the unfortunate in Rome or Southern Italy. The Church decrees the relieving of poverty as a means of saving souls, so that it is difficult to introduce any methods for the prevention of poverty, or to make the upper classes look kindly on any other reform except almsgiving.

In the middle classes little is read except newspapers and a few novels, but among the wives and daughters of professional men there are now many earnest and thoughtful women and girls who begin to have a higher ideal of life, and to look at modern questions with unprejudiced eyes. The upper and upper middle classes include a certain number who are well read, and cognisant of the opinions of the day, in politics, both home and foreign, and some who are working steadily and intelligently, placing brilliant talents, insight, and benevolence at the service of the people.

There are still many palaces in the old towns of Italy and castles and villas in country places which have preserved their grandeur and the dignity of their inhabitants. Both those who live in them and those who only come for *villegiatura* will be on the best of terms with all the peasant and *contadine* who live on the estate or round about. There is something very attractive about the friendly familiarity and homely attachment which still exist in some parts of Italy between the great lady and the peasant woman—a real survival of the old feudal feeling. The *padrona* will know every member of the family by name, and be consulted about the dowry for Giulietta and the apprenticeship for Oreste. Some generous ladies have opened industrial schools at their own expense, as the school at Burano for reviving the making of Venetian point lace, which now employs several hundred women.

In many parts of Italy the poor get no help from the higher classes; women work in the fields all through the broiling summer, reaping, gleaning, gathering olives. I have seen

girls threshing with heavy flails from early dawn to scorching midday. You pass them on the great plains of Lombardy as the train rushes by, patient, weary figures, with brown, weather-beaten faces and dark pathetic eyes, shaded by crimson and orange kerchiefs; amid the rice-fields of the east working in gangs, with bare feet and trousers, an overseer riding up and down between the ranks; waiting for hours, with sad endurance, outside the barriers of the town, where at the *dagio* every egg and chicken is checked and taxed, and the vegetables from the poor farm, and the milk from the little herd of goats. Yet terribly poor as they are, kept down by humiliating charities and oppressive taxes, the people's class are full of heart and kindness, simple, industrious, and frugal to an extent we can hardly imagine. The young wife often takes a nurse-child to bring up with her own. This is looked on as quite a little industry, and equal to keeping a pig. She helps to add to the household budget by knitting, basket-making, straw-plaiting, or some other small home industry, bringing in perhaps from twopence to tenpence a day. In the midst of dire poverty the Italian peasant woman takes great pride in her home, though it may be but two rooms; she polishes her old heirlooms of walnut chest and copper cooking pots; she and her daughters try to add to the store of house-linen, sowing a little plot of flax, which they spin and weave for themselves, and often possessing a stock of this good home-made stuff which would shame the better-off English cottager. In Tuscany, the *Massaia*, or "housemother," in a community of relatives retains this post till her death, and rules over the women, keeping the purse for small house expenses which are paid for with the proceeds of their work, care of silkworms, straw-plaiting, or rearing of poultry. The girls in Tuscany, from the age of fourteen, are allowed a certain time in the day to work for their dowry. The bride is expected to bring a bed, house-linen, and a *cassone*, or marriage chest, to her husband. If rich, a necklace of irregular pearls; if poor, one of red coral. In some parts of Italy the long silver pins stuck in a sort of halo round the back of the head are still collected by a girl, and added to year by year to form her dowry.

Wherever the tourist has come in his thousands, and the great hotels have sprung up, the people become demoralised, but on all sides, only a few miles from off the beaten track you may still find a peasantry laborious, self-respecting, with certain

simple traditions of order and seemliness, making a fight against poverty which is only abandoned when starvation becomes an actual fact, and doing their modest best to fulfil their duty to society. The real poor in Italy are the peasants; the operatives, badly paid as they are, represent the aristocracy of labour. The silk manufacture is the largest of Italy's manufacturing industries, and in 1877 employed 81,165 women and upwards of 25,000 children. Numbers are employed in cotton, hemp and flax industries. Twenty years ago 70,000 used hand-loom at home, but this industry has declined as more machine work is introduced. Out of thirty-one millions of people, nearly half are women, and nearly half of these are wage-earners in some form or other, the majority in petty home industries. Industrial and technical training has barely begun for Italy. The wages of women, even when doing the same work, are hardly more than a third that for men; and though the actual wage has risen during the last twenty years, taxes have risen too, and taxes in Italy fall heavily on the very poorest. Women are largely employed in the manufacture of straw hats, in jute works, in cigar making, in the cheap clothing trades, and many other industries. Their wages, roughly speaking, may be said to average from one franc to one franc twenty centimes a day. Italy has not yet legislated for adult women, but has laid some restrictions on child-labour. The absence of a labour bureau makes it difficult to collect information, and this, as well as the want of a proper body of factory inspectors, is deeply deplored by all Italian economists. Italy is one of the strongholds of cheap labour, and is becoming to Germany the bugbear that Germany is to England. One advantage the Italian operative has in the air and space in factories, essential to a hot climate and easy of attainment where there are no expensive ground-rents. Everywhere the opportunity of working in the air and sunshine takes the most depressing shadow off poverty. The tailoress brings her sewing-machine into the wide doorway and chatters to her neighbours as she works. Wages may be infinitesimal and hours long, but life has enjoyment and variety and a sense of human companionship and certain aids to health unknown to the toilers in the dark cellar and lonely attic.

Servants enter a family intending to stay for ever, and often do stay for years, if not for all their lives. They are extremely good-tempered and affectionate, making common cause with

the family and identifying themselves with its affairs, of which they like to know all the ins and outs. They are never presuming or over-familiar, and are as careful and economical for their mistress as they would be for themselves; overcome with excitement and self-reproach if they have allowed her to be charged a few *centesimi* above what they consider a low price.

The progress of Socialism is slowly gaining converts to the idea of greater liberty and better opportunities for women, and many women belong to those societies which have taken root in the northern provinces.

The note of primitive simplicity is still characteristic of the Italian woman. Primitive in her instincts for good and evil, simple in her vanity and her ambitions. The types of heroines we meet in Italian novels have little of the analytical or the introspective. The woman of Italy has delightful manners, and is exceedingly polite and respectful to her elders. *Simpatica*, responsive, intelligent and quick of comprehension and often full of a broad kindness, be she the simple, courteous peasant or the great lady, rising superior to the small vulgarities of modern life, she has still a charm, a freshness, a reminiscence of less complex days, is still one of the lovable and significant things of the most lovable country in the world.

EVELYN MARCH PHILLIPPS.

*THE VIGIL OF
THE LADY OF LINGANSYDE.*

WHERE the hurrying Elva water, seaward winding, meets
the tide,
There, in days forgotten, dwelt the mighty lords of Lingansyde.
High above the meeting waters watches still their crumbling
keep,
Grim and grey for weary mourning of the glories long
asleep.

Yet when Autumn's clinging fog-wreaths shroud the lonely
wave-worn strand,
Shines a light from yonder window, kindled by no mortal
hand;
And the passing yeoman shudders; whispers low: 'Tis
Hallow E'en:
For her lord's returning looks the woful lady Rosaleen.'

For to-night a ghostly figure parts the curtain of the mist;
Comes to-night the lord of Lingansyde to keep his yearly
tryst.
He the last and bravest chief that bore the shield of Lingansyde;
She the fairest lady ever warrior won to be his bride.

Twenty score of years ago, with gallant knights in goodly
show,
Forth he sailed and left her weeping, twenty score of years
ago.
And his lady watched and waited, lit her taper for a guide,
Looked and prayed and looked: but never homeward came
he: and she died.

But her restless, sorrowing spirit watches still, and once a
year
Shines at Hallowtide her candle, while she keeps her vigil
drear;
And its light awakes her lover, where, in lordly state lies he,
With his gallant knights about him, in the silence of the sea.

HELEN OUSTON

A WOODEN CHANTICLEER.

BY HON. MRS. W. F. MAITLAND, AUTHOR OF 'THE CROWN
PITIFUL,' ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

‘So I have seen a sunbeam soft
Steal through a sick man’s darkened room,
And make the weary heart within
Forget awhile its pain and gloom.’

Mrs. Alexander.

HE hardly dared to think what could have happened as he approached the well-known little door. The house only boasted of one floor. A little room at the back of the shop was Père Joseph’s bedroom, this room and a small scullery were all the apartments the house possessed. On entering the shop Claud found it in darkness, owing to the shutter being still unopened. He groped about the room calling Père Joseph by name, and trying in the darkness to find the door leading to the bedroom. A groan, as if of some one in pain, at length led to his discovering it, and opening it he found himself in a small, narrow room. It was not easy to see in here, as the window had a curtain drawn across it, but a shaft of light struck through a narrow opening on the child’s figure in the doorway as he stood clutching his red cap in one hand, whilst with the other he held the precious cock fast pressed to his bosom. At the sound of the opening door a huddled heap lying on a small bed facing it, and which, alas ! proved to be poor Père Joseph, moved slightly, for he caught sight of the boy, and his voice in a queer, strained tone called out, ‘Ah, little Pierre—little Pierre—thou art come at last. Ah ! how I have prayed for this, only just to see thy dear face once more !’ Then as the child ran to him the old man stroked his face with one hand, whilst he tried frantically to lift himself up, and seemed in the greatest joy. ‘’Tis the fair day—the fair day,’ he said with thick utterance, ‘and thou

shalt see it all at last. Oh ! thou shalt be happy—' here the poor old man's voice, which he tried in vain to raise, sank to a hoarse whisper, in which he begged piteously 'for water—water for the love of Heaven.' Claud, who couldn't think what had happened, but feared Père Joseph was very ill, hurried to the scullery, where he found a pitcher of water and a cup, and with these he returned. It was sad to see how terribly thirsty the old man was. Claud had to fill the cup again and again and hold it to his lips, for it seemed as if the only movement Père Joseph could make was with one arm. The thought struck the boy—child as he was—how long had the poor suffering old man been lying thus—alone and helpless. But though Claud questioned him, he seemed now unable to answer or to understand, and he held the wooden cock in a convulsive grip with the arm and hand he could move. He had felt for it, and had taken it up from the bed where Claud had laid it in order to fetch the water. Something must be done—Claud knew this, he felt the old man could not be left thus—and promising to return quickly the boy went outside the cottage. To his great joy he saw the curé pacing leisurely along not far away. Lame though he was, it did not take Claud long to reach his side, and to pour the description of the strange state le père Joseph was in into his sympathising ears. The curé did not waste time with questions. Together they returned to the poor old man's bedside ; and there, seeing how things were, the curé said a doctor must be fetched at once. But he had noticed Claud's lameness, and so, after lifting le père Joseph more comfortably into his bed, and straightening the coverlet over it, he searched the scullery for a stewpan, and found some meat too to make broth with. He gave these things to Claud, and told him to light the stove in the shop, and put the stewpan on it, and then promising he would soon return he hurried off for the doctor. Claud bustled about as well as he could with his lame foot, let in the light by opening the shutter in the shop, also partially drawing the curtain of the bedroom window, and finally he sat down with the door open into the shop to wait for the broth to be ready. He had found a spoon and meant to try and feed his old friend if he could. Le père Joseph meanwhile, since the curé had moved him into a more comfortable position, lay as if in a stupor, his loud breathing alone disturbing the silence. Poor little Claud sat watching

the fire in the stove, and feeling terribly frightened about his friend.

It was really not long, although it seemed so to the child, before the good curé returned, bringing with him the doctor, whom he had most fortunately found at home. He was a young man, and had come by chance to so out of the way a little place as G——, but he was doing good work among the poor people. He had not long left the hospital which had helped to train him, but after having seen the poor old man he declared that a good nurse was what he most required, and ought to have; but of course the question was how could he get one. Le père Joseph had many neighbours, he knew dozens of kindly chattering ones whose pots and kettles the old man had mended, and it was the knowledge of how often these neighbours looked in to bring him work, or to take away what he had repaired, that made the doctor and curé both hope that the poor old fellow could not have lain suffering by himself for a day or two. It was bad enough to think of, even twelve hours alone and in the dark. The doctor considered he had had a stroke, and feared his life was in great danger. In endeavouring to find out what was really the matter the doctor had tried to remove the wooden cock from his hand, but Père Joseph had resisted this in so delirious and frantic a manner, that it was thought best to leave it where it was, for it seemed as if the contact of the toy in some strange way soothed the old man greatly.

‘It will want a steady, quick, capable woman to nurse him,’ said the doctor, ‘and I cannot think of such an one in *this* place.’

‘Wait a moment,’ said the curé reflecting; ‘I really believe, if I can persuade her to come, that I know such a person—and it will be a good thing for her too,’ he added to himself, and then aloud, he continued, ‘and if thou canst remain here a while, I will even try and fetch her, though I do not promise to succeed.’

The doctor said he could remain for a certain time, and he began administering some restorative he had compounded to his patient as the good curé hurried away in search of the person he had thought of. The day was drawing in, and Claud, who had now been several hours from his home, began to feel anxious about what he was to do. His mother, he felt, would think some ill had happened to him, and how could he

return to her without the wooden cock ? and the old man held it so fast there was no chance of his being able to obtain it. What should he do ? He made all sorts of plans in his head, but none that were feasible. By this time Père Joseph—who had been given some beef-tea by the doctor, Claud holding the basin all the time—had fallen into a kind of sleep, and the doctor made a sign to the boy not to make a noise, so Claud stole softly into the front room. He wished very much he could tell the doctor that he wanted to go home, if only to explain matters to his mother, but no talking could be managed whilst this silence had to be maintained, and for aught he knew, he thought—the doctor believed he always lived there, which indeed was a fact.

It got darker, and Claud, who was sitting on the floor staring at the fire in the little stove, began to first feel very stupid, and then to fall fast asleep.

How long he slept he never knew, but he awoke suddenly with the feeling that something dreadful had happened, and then that some one was bending over him—some one in a cloak ; who could it be ? But at the first whispered accents Claud sprang up clinging to the figure, for it was, in short, none other but his mother. She had been persuaded, she told her son, to come and nurse le père Joseph by the curé, and her bedding and clothes would shortly arrive, also Claud's things. The curé had found a man to carry them.

CHAPTER V.

'There's One who is the widow's stay,
Who careth for the fatherless.
Sure He will love that little child,
And bless her for her tenderness.'

Mrs. Alexander.

'OH, my mother, how good of you to come !' whispered Claud, whilst he helped her off with her outdoor things. 'Now everything will be done that can be for poor Père Joseph. Oh ! he is so terribly ill, my mother, you will be sorry for him, I know.'

The curé proved to be perfectly right about Madame Martin. She was a born nurse. With her calm, quiet manner she

had also the quick eye which sees when anything is wanted in a moment, and divines immediately how to do it. A week past by, a week that would have put to the test the powers of any nurse. Widow Martin and the doctor were indefatigable, she implicitly obeyed his orders, and he expressed his appreciation of her to the curé, who had looked in to see how things were going on, by saying she was a veritable treasure.

Strangely enough, she seemed to enjoy her work, and to be happy and satisfied with it, and little Claud felt puzzled, but he also fancied somehow that she was pleased at feeling herself really of use. Claud too was quite a help, and sometimes if the poor old fellow grew restless his little hand put into Père Joseph's had the immediate effect of quieting him, and the child would stand beside him till his legs ached, when he knelt instead. It must be mentioned that the ankle now had completely recovered.

One good effect of Madame Martin's being in the house, at least in the doctor's eyes, was the power she had of keeping out the neighbours, for Claud's mother's unpopularity did this to perfection. So that though many inquiries at first had been made, the sight of the pale, quiet widow drove the inquirers away with shrugs of their shoulders, for Madame Martin had nothing to gossip about to them, and she had also the doctor's orders that quiet in the house must be kept up, and no outside visitors admitted.

But there came a time when the doctor lost heart ; it was at the beginning of the second week, and Madame Martin was quite aware that a critical moment in the illness had arrived, and was very anxious too. She felt as if she could not keep it all to herself, and whispered that evening, as she bent over the little bed Claud slept in in the shop, 'Say a prayer for Père Joseph, he is very, very ill to-night.'

'I will indeed, my mother,' was the answer, 'though I think you know I always do pray for his recovery. But do you think him worse to-night ?'

'I fear so, my son,' replied his mother, as she turned away to watch beside Père Joseph's sick-bed.

In the night, before even the grey of coming dawn had appeared, Claud was aroused by Madame Martin, who bade him hurry on his clothes and fetch the doctor ; she had lighted a lantern for him to carry, and fortunately the distance

to the doctor's house was short. The child obeyed, trembling, hardly daring to look at his mother's face. The doctor came as quickly as he could with Claud ; he told him on the way he thought this time he would be able to decide whether or no Père Joseph would live.

'Either he will be better or worse before morning, I think,' he said. But they had now reached the cottage, and the doctor hurried to Père Joseph's side.

Poor little Claud spent a miserable time, waiting in the shop for what appeared to him ages ; but at length the thought of getting some hot coffee ready over the stove for his mother, and perhaps also for the doctor, for he might like a cup too, gave him an occupation which lasted till the door opened and Madame Martin came into the room. Claud had the coffee-pot in his hand, but at the sight of his mother's face he put it down and sprang into her arms, for she was—smiling. And whilst he held her fast she whispered, 'Père Joseph is really a little better this morning. The doctor thinks so truly.' And so now every day the improvement continued, and Père Joseph got a little, a very little, farther on the road to recovery ; it was very gradual of course, but each day he could move more, and speak too, and when he did speak it was in his old sensible way. At length came a day when he was even allowed to sit up for a while. And Claud ran out to the little wood near the town and filled his hands with the violets that grew thickly there in the short grass to give his dear Père Joseph.

Overhead, high up, a lark sang joyously, and everything was so fresh and sweet and green and full of hope. The lark seemed singing of happiness to come, and Claud felt it in every fibre of his small being, and leapt and sang too on his way back to the little shop.

It was quite a tidy place now, owing to his mother's exertions, and he found her standing there and not in Père Joseph's room as he had expected.

'My mother,' he said, moving forward, 'thou hast something to tell me ; I can see it in thine eyes,' for in effect Madame Martin's eyes were dancing.

'Thou funny child, thou hast guessed right, I have indeed something to tell thee—some—thing that will give thee joy, also, I think, surprise thee very much. Have a care, my son,' as the child's grasp of her hands in his excitement became

painful. 'But oh, Claud, who thinkest thou that Père Joseph is—the friend that thou didst choose for thyself, and hast, I think, loved long? Now indeed thou must love him more, much more, for oh, Claud, he is thy—grandfather.'

There was a silence of a minute, and then Claud, with a white face and stammering, exclaimed—

'Mother! mother! How knowest thou this? Can it—indeed be true?'

'It is truly so, my son,' was the answer; 'and if thou askest how I know it thou wilt be still more astonished, for it was the wooden cock who told us.'

'What could his mother mean?' thought Claud, now completely mystified, his brown eyes staring in blank amazement. But the facts were these, though Madame Martin had no leisure then to explain anything further, for she had to return to Père Joseph with the medicine it was just time for him to take.

Later on Claud learnt this story from her lips. That morning, after he had been helped into the easy chair, which the curé had lent for this purpose, Père Joseph had asked for the cock; he had allowed it for some little time now to be placed in sight of his bedside, instead of always, as at first, holding it in his hands. And he said as he took it briefly, 'I have long wanted to tell thee, but could not, that thy boy's father was my son.' And as Madame Martin could not believe her ears, and thought he had again relapsed into delirium, he went on, 'I carved this cock, and carved it for him, my little Pierre (thy husband), for his seventh birthday. See here,' and with weak, trembling fingers that at first could not do the work, he at length drew out one of the exquisite feathers in one wing, and showed how underneath on a flat sunken spot was carved in fine, small, distinct letters Père Joseph's name, under that his son's, and then the date. So the cock was, as Madame Martin had said, the informant.

The whole story of the old man's losing his son was as follows, for we need not wait, as Claud and his mother had to do, till the old man was strong enough to tell them.

It was on the little Pierre's seventh birthday, and he had been promised by his father that he should be taken to see a very large fair which occurred once a year at a distant town. Together they had set out in their cart from the little farm that Père Joseph then lived in, alone with his boy, for his

wife had died when Pierre was a tiny baby. They arrived at the fair, and Père Joseph took his son to see all the sights and amusements, and they were both very happy ; but little Pierre told his father that much as he had enjoyed himself nothing had given him so much pleasure as the beautiful cock which his father had carved for his birthday, and which had accompanied him ; for on starting to the fair that morning Pierre would not be parted from it, but said it must go with them to see the fair too. And as Père Joseph seldom denied his son anything, for he loved him with an idolising love, the cock did go with them in the wide pocket inside little Pierre's coat, though it was often taken out to be caressed and played with on the way by its proprietor.

CHAPTER VI.

'And the shrill cock claps his wings,
And the merry lark unsprings.'

It was midday, and Père Joseph and his little son, who by this time had had enough of the amusements of the fair, had withdrawn to a spot close to a lake. Its waters shone deep and green beside the roadway, and they sat down and ate the repast which they had brought with them. Little Pierre kept springing up and down all the time he was eating, for he had been much excited by the sights he had witnessed at the fair ; and at length he declared he could not eat any more, he must view the wonderful lake nearer. So he had sprung up again, and, almost before his father had time to realise it, the tragedy (as he thought it then and a lifetime afterwards) had occurred. The child raced down the steep bank, and in a moment he tripped and fell headlong into the deep waters. As they closed over the boy's head Père Joseph sprang up to rush to his rescue by, although he could not swim, hurling himself into the lake after him. But it was not to be. As he rose to his feet a runaway horse and cart that had been approaching unseen by Père Joseph in his terror dashed at him, throwing him down a bank the other side of the road and stretching him senseless at the foot. In the meantime, most fortunately for little Pierre, and none too soon, a peasant came jogging along from another direction in his cart. As he came near

the lake he saw something struggling in the water ; he stopped, got out, and not without some danger to himself at length succeeded in rescuing the little boy. The peasant could not see any one about to ask questions of, and it was already time for him to be at his home, so wrapping the unconscious child up as well as he could he laid him in the straw in his cart and took him home with him to a village in the opposite way—miles further still from the town of G——, Pierre's own home. In this new village the child was brought up ; whilst poor Père Joseph, who never again was aught but a helpless cripple after his accident, was picked up hours afterwards by some kind poor people, who took him into their house for the night and fetched a doctor to attend to his injuries, which were many ; and then the poor man lay for a very long time between life and death. He constantly asked about his boy, and what was at first thought to be the ravings of a disordered brain was finally found to be true, and the poor Père Joseph returned broken-hearted to his home, believing always that the darling of his life lay beneath the green treacherous waters of the lake. Of course search had been made for the child's body, also, as is known, in vain. And Père Joseph, on going back to G——, determined to give up his farm near the town which was so full of melancholy recollections of his little Pierre.

And at length he settled down in a small house in G——, where Claud had found him out, and where he followed, as is known, his useful trade of repairing, occasionally satisfying the bent of his mind by carving the wonderful toys that had attracted Claud, and which Père Joseph had learnt to make as a lad with his knife whilst minding the cattle on the mountains, for his father had been a farmer too. Who can describe the joy of the old man at having Claud for a grandson ? And his declining years were made also happy by his daughter-in-law's ever-increasing devotion. When Père Joseph was quite well again, Madame Martin, who had a little money, and Père Joseph, who had more than his neighbours suspected, bought back between them the little farm on the hill (it was near the wood where Claud had gathered the violets), and was the birthplace of Père Joseph as well as his little Pierre, and here the happy trio passed many very joyful years. Claud, as he grew up, became the clever young farmer the old man had hoped his son would have been, and was the pride of his

mother and grandfather, for he was a good lad, and always had been, as the curé remarked to his mother on one of his visits to the farm, where, it need not be said, he was ever exceedingly welcome.

Time went on, as it always must, and at last at a very great age the dear Père Joseph passed away, and it can be imagined how deeply mourned and regretted by Claud and his mother. Life was sadly empty without him to them for many a year afterwards. Then mention must be made of Claud's marrying a young girl, whom his mother heartily approved of and liked, and Madame Martin lived to see her grandchildren growing up all around her, for in time there were seven of them, boys and girls; and Claud said he thought his mother grew younger rather than older, and at any rate it was true of her in manner and spirits, for she seemed so much lighter hearted amongst them, and played with them, as Claud remarked often, 'in a way she never played with him when a little boy.' But, though there are so many grandchildren, the wooden cock rested on the shelf in a place of honour under a glass shade, where it could be looked at with reverence but not handled; and once in a while Claud would show it to his children and tell them the story of it, and make it both crow and flap its wings, for Père Joseph, with those clever fingers of his, had restored its original powers; he had done this when they had first settled at the farm. It had been the first piece of work he had attempted again after his illness, and it was his last piece of repairing. For from that time he devoted himself exclusively to carving, and his work is well known, and large sums have been given for it. If ever any one is lucky enough to come across any carving of his in the market it can always be known, for on each work is carved in clear, distinct characters Père Joseph's name.

None of the grandchildren, like Claud, have ever inherited his talent, and so they have never tried to make again 'a wooden chanticleer.'

(Concluded.)

SOME FORGOTTEN BOOKS.

I.—FULLER'S 'WORTHIES.'

OF all the writers of his age—an age that produced a goodly muster of names celebrated in literature—I doubt if there is one who strikes so personal a note as Thomas Fuller. And, of all his works, it is into 'The History of the Worthies of England' that he seems to me to have infused himself the most thoroughly. For this reason, it has long been my favourite amongst his voluminous works. Certainly, I make no pretence of having read more than the most generally known. I have made no researches after the rarer volumes; and the 'Church History,' 'The History of the Holy War,' and a selection of the 'Good Thoughts,' are all of the rest that I have chanced hitherto to light upon. Some day I intend to read 'The Holy State and the Profane State,' which some account his best work: for the present I am content with the 'Worthies,' and I do not imagine that the perusal of any other of his books will alter my predilection.

Fuller was surely the chief of all loiterers in literature, the prince of desultory writers. He had the true spirit of the antiquarian, ever ready to pursue some interesting legend and track it to its source, without reference to any connection it might have with the subject he was treating at the moment. To him digression was not merely a pleasing ornament, but a positive necessity, and his method of writing (if indeed it can be called a method) was so contrived as to secure for himself the greatest latitude possible. Even in his histories he so arranges matters (by dividing them up into a series of disconnected paragraphs) as to include anything of interest that may chance to strike him on his rambling path. In the 'Worthies' he was the better suited from the inconsequent nature of his task. He had here the fuller scope—not perhaps that this made much difference to so inveterate a wanderer—

but the plan of the work was at least more in harmony with his nature. The result is a most fascinating book—a generous medley of facts, anecdotes, antiquarian lore, illuminated at every turn by flashes of unexpected wit. To read the 'Worthies' is like holding a friendly conversation with the man himself, and that man one of the most entertaining of his age.

Thomas Fuller, the second of that name, was born in 1608, son of the rector of St. Peter's, Aldwinkle, Northamptonshire. He seems to have entered at Queen's College, Cambridge, at the somewhat early age of twelve—probably in order to secure the interest of his uncle, Dr. Davenant, who was then Master of the college, and subsequently Bishop of Salisbury. In spite of this high connection, young Fuller failed to obtain a fellowship, and migrated to Sydney as a fellow-commoner. In 1630 Corpus appointed him perpetual curate of St. Benet's—an incumbency only remarkable from the fact that he buried there Hobson the carrier, famous by tradition and Miltonic verse. Thence he went to Broad Winsor, in Dorsetshire, where he married his first wife, who, however, died shortly afterwards. The bereaved widower next went to London, where he was appointed to a lectureship at the Savoy. When preaching, in 1642, at Westminster Abbey, he gave great offence to the Parliamentary party—a fact that probably decided him to join the king at Oxford. Here, however, he contrived to offend the Royalists almost as much, by another sermon preached at the king's request. His enemies have occasionally accused Fuller of being a 'trimmer,' and it is true enough that he contrived, after these two initial errors, to steer a fairly successful course; but it is probable that he was too benevolent and too little of a bigot to please either faction at a time when party spirit ran high. Later, the moderation of his views proved more acceptable.

His living having been sequestrated by order of Parliament, Fuller applied for, and obtained, a chaplaincy in the Royalist forces. It was while on this service that he collected most of the material for his 'Worthies,' but the work was never published during his lifetime. He survived the Commonwealth only by a few months, dying in 1661, having been appointed chaplain-extraordinary to the king, and created Doctor of Divinity. In all probability a bishopric was in store for him had he lived a few years longer. He died in

his lodgings at Covent Garden, of a fever, for which, after the fashion of the time, he was copiously bled. One account represents him as calling out for pen and ink at the last. The 'History of the Worthies of England' was still unfinished; it was given to the world the year after by his son, with an apologetic preface. Fourteen cities or counties remained unprinted at his death.

The design of the 'Worthies' is set forth by the author himself, characteristically enough, in his introduction, 'England,' he says, 'may fitly be compared to an House not *very great*, but *convenient*, and the several Shires may properly be resembled to the *rooms* thereof. Now, as learned Master *Camden* and painful Master *Speed* with others, have discribed the rooms themselves; so is it our intention, God willing, to discribe the *Furniture* of those *rooms*.'

Learned Master *Camden* is known by name to most of us as the author of 'Britannia' and the 'Annals of the Reign of Elizabeth.' Painful Master *Speed* is John Speed, the historian, who sufficiently earned his epithet by the production of a lengthy series of works, beginning with 'A Description of England and Wales,' and going on to 'A prospect of the most famous parts of the world—together with all the provinces, counties, and shires contained in Great Brittain's Empire.' With the above definition of his intentions, Fuller proceeds to detail the five ends he propounds in this book, thus :—

First *To gain some Glory to God*
 Secondly *To preserve the Memories of the Dead*
 Thirdly *To present Examples to the Living*
 Fourthly *To entertain the Reader with Delight*
 And lastly (which I am not ashamed publicly to profess), *To procure some honest profit to my self.*

Fuller was one of the first authors to make an income by his writings, if we are to judge from this public profession, and from another passage where he states that 'no Stationer had ever suffered loss by him.' But I do not suppose his last end the most important in his eyes, of the five. Probably the fourth was nearest to his heart, if we are to examine closely. Indeed, he confesses a little later—with a view, no doubt, to obtaining a little more licence in digression—that 'to this end I have purposely interlaced (not as meat, but as condiment) many delightful stories that so the Reader' may

arise 'Tucundior, if not Religiosior or Doctior.' It was ever his desire to put the reader at once upon an amiable footing with himself, and if the meat be something highly seasoned, the fault at any rate was none too common to that age of writing. The condiment was of the best quality. It may be admitted that the book is not one to be read through at a sitting: like all rambling dissertations, it should be opened here and there, as the mood may strike you. Dipped into in this desultory fashion, it will yield pearls enough for a lifetime. It is impossible to exhaust the author's store of pregnant sayings, witty conceits, and quaint moralisings.

I suppose that no writer has ever mentioned the works of Thomas Fuller without feeling compelled to use this adjective 'quaint.' The iteration may be irritating, but it is surely pardonable. If we are to label the man with an epithet, it must be conceded that no other single word could more fitly express his quality. Fuller had a humorous outlook upon life: he had the most wonderful faculty of perceiving a comical analogy. Even upon the most serious subjects—as when describing some unparalleled disaster—he could not refrain from using just that turn of phrase that brought out the laughable side of the matter. This peculiarity of his no doubt accounted for some of his popularity as a preacher. Sometimes his congregation must have been hard put to it to restrain an outburst of unseemly laughter. And yet, with all this, there was no lack of reverence in him for sacred subjects; it was rather the overflowing good nature of a pious man whose mind had an unusual aptitude for whimsical fancies. It may safely be said that no more amiable character than his has ever so engagingly expressed itself in literature. His writings give the impression of one who passed a happy and sunny existence, little disturbed by the 'drums and tramlings' of those troublous times. With all his wit—and he had a power of caustic sarcasm surpassed by few—he was never malignant: there is no afterthought of bitterness about his gibes: in an age of bigotry and intolerance he was one of the few who could speak of Papist and Puritan alike without bitterness. A sunny, open nature, he had the rare faculty of enjoying a joke even when directed against himself. Those were days when it was not considered derogatory to pun upon a proper name—he tells us himself the sad history of one *Nequam*, whose name became the vehicle for so many jokes 'which indeed

made themselves,' in that jesting age, that he was forced to change the orthography to *Neckam* 'to discompose such conceits for the future.' The name of Fuller was no less open a mark for such as conceived themselves skilful in this form of wit. He writes to one such with a pleasant mingling of humour and dignity, 'I had rather my name should make many causelessly merry, than any justly sad; and, seeing it lieth equally open and obvious to praise and dispraise, I shall as little be elated when flattered—"Fuller of wit and learning" as dejected when flouted—"Fuller of folly and ignorance."'

The eighty pages or so of introductory matter with which Fuller prefaces his 'Worthies,' detailing and defining (with numerous divagations) the purpose and scope of his work, form by no means the least interesting part of the book. He is always at his best in definitions, in discriminations, and in suggesting ingenious derivations of words. His definition of a proverb is as good as most—'Much matter decocted into few words.' And he proceeds to name the six essentials of one of these crystals of common wisdom, namely that it be—

- | | | |
|---------------|---|--------------|
| 1. Short | } Otherwise it is no <i>Proverb</i> but a | 1. Oration. |
| 2. Playn | | 2. Riddle. |
| 3. Common | | 3. Secret. |
| 4. Figurative | | 4. Sentence. |
| 5. Antient | | 5. Upstart. |
| 6. True | | 6. Libel. |

This, too, is his definition of Saints—

The word accepts of several interpretations, or rather they are injuriously obtruded upon it.

1. *Saints of Fiction*, who never were in *rerum natura*, as *St. Christopher* &c.
2. *Saints of Faction*, wherewith our age doth swarme, alledging two arguments for their Sainthood. First, that they so call themselves; Secondly, that those of their own party call them so. Neither of these belong to our cognizance.
3. *Saints of Superstition*, reputed so by the Court of *Rome*.
4. *Saints indeed*, parallel to *St. Paul's Widows indeed*, and both deserve to be honoured.

And here, once more, is a perverse derivation—referring to the common saying (which touched himself rather nearly) that clergymen's sons, since the Reformation, were commonly unsuccessful—'dissolute in their *Lives*, and doleful in their *Deaths*; This I may call a *Libell* indeed; according to Sir *Francis Bacon* his description thereof; for first, it is a *Lye*, a *notorious untruth*; and then a *Bell*, some *lowd* and *lewd* Tongue hath *told*, yea *Rung* it out, and perchance was welcome Musick to some hearers thereof' The derivation

is borrowed, it is true, but the language and the application are his own.

Historical accuracy was not, perhaps, our author's strongest point—and indeed he lays no claim to it himself. He quotes, with approval, the old saying, 'Almost and very nigh Have saved many a Lie'; and if there is any doubt about the authenticity of any tale he narrates, does not scruple to say so. After the manner of Herodotus, and with an equal simplicity, he sweeps cheerfully into his drag-net all that comes his way—curious and amusing traditions, quaint proverbs, droll anecdotes; but does not make any pretence of having sifted his evidence, or of having sought carefully to discriminate between conflicting accounts. And yet he was not a careless or an indolent writer. The mere accumulation of his material must have entailed considerable personal labour. He seems, for a historian of that period, to have been even exceptionally diligent in research. By his own account, he consulted in the compilation of the 'Worthies' as many as four sources of information—printed books, records in the public offices, manuscripts in private hands, and the oral testimony of relations. The haphazard arrangement of his matter helps somewhat to obscure the evidence of that industry he employed. And it must be remembered that the collection of his material was not pursued under the happiest auspices. Apparently, his books and documents were lost at the time of the sequestration of his living, and it must have been difficult enough, in his peregrinations with the Royalist army, to arrange his notes and memoranda in anything like a satisfactory manner. But it is beside the mark to apologise for any failings in his work as viewed from the standpoint of a modern historian. For my part, I should be sorry indeed if he had omitted a single doubtful story from his collection, on the dry ground of mere historical accuracy.

The scheme of the 'Worthies' is simplicity itself. In alphabetical order the author takes the counties of England, and, under a number of headings, discourses at large of their most interesting products. His native county (of Northampton) will suffice to give some notion of his method. Beginning with a few remarks on its geographical position, he proceeds to discuss its natural commodities. Saltpetre and pigeons are the two he names—a sufficiently curious conjunction. Passing to the manufactures, he declares that there are none worth naming. 'It is *enough* for Northamptonshire' he says, with his customary

profusion of italic letters, 'to sell their *Wooll*, whilst that other *Countrys* make cloath thereof. . . . However the *Town* of *Northampton* may be said to stand chiefly on other mens *Leggs*'—a testimonial to the ancient nature of that boot and shoe trade which occupies it largely at the present day. Thence he goes on to discuss the buildings, and the wonders of the neighbourhood. In the section Medicinal Waters he mentions Wellingborough-well 'at which Queen Mary lay many weeks. What benefit her Majesty received by the Spring here, I know not, this I know, that the Spring received benefit from her Majesty.' Next he quotes the local proverbs, of which one ran 'He that must eat a buttered Fagot, let him go to Northampton.' On this he remarks, with reference to the scarcity of fuel that prompted the saying 'Sure I am . . . that the *clearing* of many *dark places*, where formerly plenty of wood, is all the *new light* this age produced.' Not until after this lengthy preamble does he come to the 'Worthies' proper, whom he subdivides into Princes, Saints, Martyrs, Cardinals, Prelates, Statesmen, Capital Judges and Writers on the Law, Writers, Benefactors to the Publick, and Memorable Persons. A list follows of Mayors, Sheriffs, and so forth, with short biographies or comments on certain of the most important. Last of all comes a pithy Farewell, in this case a wish that the Nene (or Nine, as he perversely spells it) were made Ten (that is to say, navigable) from Northampton to Peterborough.

But the writer who incautiously begins to quote from Fuller soon finds that he has tapped a stream that may overwhelm him. I will conclude with one more—a short biography of a contemporary who stands enrolled among the Memorable Persons of Lincolnshire:—

'JAMES YORKE a *Blacksmith* of *Lincolne*, and an excellent Workman in his Profession. Insomuch that if *Pegasus* himself would wear *shoes*, this man alone is fit to make them, contriving them so thin and light, as that they would be no burthen to him. But he is a Servant as well of *Apollo* as *Vulcan*, turning his *Stiddy* into a *Study*, having lately set forth a *Book* of *Heraldry* called the *Union of Honour*, containing the *Arms* of the English Nobility, and the Gentry of *Lincolnshire*. And although there be some mistakes (no hand so steady as alwayes to *hit the Nail on the head*) yet is it of singular use and industriously performed : being set forth Anno 1640.'

I fancy few worthy artisans have ever attained to immortality on more easy terms.

E. H. LACON WATSON.

THE EYE-ARTIST.

BY JOHN GAUNT.

'All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power,
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist,
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour;
The light that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to love itself in the sky,
The music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
Enough that He heard it once; we shall hear it by and by.'

Robert Browning.

PART I.

THERE was once an artist—a hunchback—and he dwelt in an attic at the top of a tall old house at Dinan.

He was quite a young man, and he had no friends save a wall-eyed cur who shared his scanty livelihood and still scantier affections.

Well, he was an artist, and he painted eyes, working hard, and setting the goal of celebrity before him. Day after day, month after month, he painted them: brown, blue, black, green, grey—eyes of beasts, orbs of men and birds, of fishes, of women, and of children. And that is the order of excellency with which he portrayed them.

Often, in the early mornings, he would go forth through the street, past the coffee-roasters, with their piles of fragrant berries on sacking along the footway, down the Boulevard Duclos, beyond the Château,¹ with its dreary prisoners gazing over the valley—far away to where the cattle in their verdant, dewy pastures grazed.

And there the hunchback would halt, and take out his shabby paint-box, and unstrap the little old camp-stool, and sit and work.

It was a curious idea of his, to paint nothing but eyes. The people called him mad; they shunned him. Ghastly tales

¹ Used as a prison.

were whispered of that mysterious attic, with its eye-covered walls and its hunchbacked inhabitant. Devils frolicked there at night, and 'he' presided at their orgies, said the townsfolk.

The street *gamins* screeched, 'Bonjour, Monsieur le Paon !' as the artist came in sight ; and nursemaids told their charges that the '*diable bossu*' would catch them if they were naughty.

But Pierre Merlin cared for none of these things, and toiled with unabating energy.

He took a fancy for studying the eyes of imbeciles, and would tramp over the hills to la Garé, that vast asylum, with its lovely park and chapel ; where, bribing the porter out of his meagre savings, he would wander for hours through the grounds.

Sometimes he sketched the sullen eyes of lunatics watching him from behind their barred windows ; or he studied those of harmless idiots at the stone-quarry, whilst, overlooked by a fat, sensuous-visioned priest, they toiled and gibbered.

To most folks it was a pathetic sight, but Pierre, baptized neither by love nor suffering, realised it all merely as 'material'—the forlorn souls were nothing to him. And eagerly, hour after hour, he bent over his sketches.

Still, many things confounded him, and many eyes he could not draw nor paint. They were the eyes that had suffered ; but he didn't understand that.

Strolling down a side-walk one day, he came upon a shrine of the Virgin in the midst of a grove. Before it, in an agony of grief and prayer, crouched a half-wit, his sad, lustreless eyes gazing upwards in the anguish of despair. And the hunchback slipped behind a bush, and silently undid his paint-box.

But it was no use ; again and again he tried, whilst still the idiot knelt as waiting, and the Virgin, with her tawdry sky-blue draperies and gilded ornaments, smiled woodenly down upon him.

An hour, two hours, the artist worked ; then, with a piteous, inarticulate howl, the crouching figure gathered itself together and crept away.

And Pierre Merlin, looking at his work, cursed it aloud. What was it he could not interpret and portray ? To be floored by a lunatic——

'*Parbleu !*' he exclaimed, in angry disgust, and smudged his sketch recklessly.

'Twas long ere he came to the asylum again. Meantime, like most technical enthusiasts, he gained a degree of technical

success, and, further, he began to grow 'the fashion.' People found curiosity and interest gradually overruling their earlier sentiments of repulsion for the hunchback and his attic, and they climbed the crooked stairs to investigate Pierre's grotesque collection in increasing numbers.

It became the thing to rave about '*ce charmant peinteur*,' and you were indeed behind the times if at any rate one pair of his '*beau yeux*' adorned not your salon.

Little misses, too, would save their pocket-money, and a Cerise and a Marguerite, joining forces, would purchase just *one* eye, meet for adorning their school bedroom, and evoking the envious admiration of an impecunious Fanchette or a Marie.

Pierre Merlin thought little of women ; and, perhaps for that very reason, his most enthusiastic admirers were of that scorned but gentle sex. Bouquets, scented invitations, ravishing smiles they showered upon him ; and in acknowledgment the artist sneered and snarled, and, when near him, lavished kicks upon Monton, the cur—as is the way of single men.

After a time a great Parisian painter came to view his work, and the hunchback rubbed his stubbly chin in ecstasy as he ushered him into the presence of the Eyes.

For some moments, as the great man strolled slowly round the attic, there was silence.

Finally he paused.

'My friend,' he observed deliberately, as he turned and faced him, 'this is not mere talent, it is genius. You must come to Paris, and make yourself a name. But you can do better than these !' And laying a hand on the artist's shrunken shoulder his visitor gazed scrutinisingly into his face.

Then all the Eyes—of toads, and frogs and fishes, cold, greedy eyes ; and those of great placid cattle and timid sheep ; and the eyes of selfish men and dull idiots,—all these stamped with the soulless individuality of Pierre Merlin,—seemed to turn and watch.

'Ah ! monsieur,' cried he excitedly, 'always I am struggling after something, I know not what—some intangible Mystery that will make my work complete—and I cannot find it !'

"That Mystery will reveal itself—work on !" replied the other, and the strange light the artist could not paint shone in his eyes like holy stars.

Soon, with a little further conversation, the two men parted.

And time went on.

Presently came letters addressed to—

M. PIERRE MERLIN,
Rue des Gobelins,

Dinan,

and notes back, in a queer, cramped hand, endorsed—

M. HENRI FOIN,
14, Avenue du Roi,

Paris.

And, by and by, the good people of Dinan were amazed, one fine morning, to see Pierre Merlin lugging Monton by a very tight string and equipped for a journey. His scanty wardrobe was contained in a battered tin box, and his '*beaux yeux*,' enshrined in a crate, followed him on a hand-truck to the station.

So the townsfolk understood that the hunchback was going to Paris to make his fortune, and each said to each what a charmingly original man he was, and how they had known him ever since he was quite a little boy. . . .

PART II.

THUS it came to pass that Pierre Merlin journeyed to Paris in quest of his own soul.

He took a flat in a quiet quarter of the metropolis—for of late his savings had increased—and there, unknown, he dwelt and laboured.

Daily he would wander through the great sinful city, and watch and think. The people passed him in pain and joy, in sorrow and iniquity, and he noted all, and the walls of his chambers became covered with their eyes.

At last, strolling one day down a squalid street, Pierre beheld a sorrowful-faced woman slowly approaching him. She was cleanly, even carefully clothed, and from her pinched, oval face shone out eyes so exquisitely tender, yet so unutterably sad, that as the hunchback's cold, critical glance comprehended her, he started and stood still. But whilst he looked she turned down a side-court and disappeared.

He hastened after her.

'Hah ! Mademoiselle ! *Arrêtez !*' he cried.

The woman turned, and, with a grave, questioning dignity in her tone, she said, '*Monsieur ? Que voulez-vous ?*'

'I am an artist,' exclaimed the hunchback eagerly, 'and I want you for a model—only to paint your eyes. I will pay you—you understand? Yes? You will come?'

Her thin face grew thoughtful. 'My mother is ill.'

'But I will pay you—I will pay you half a franc for every morning!'

'It is little.'

Pierre shrugged his shoulders.

Monton walked up to her, and thrust his cold nose into her hand. The woman stroked his head reflectively. They were very poor—nearly starving.

'I will come, monsieur,' at last she said; 'a neighbour shall companion my mother.'

'Soit!' said Pierre briefly, and turned away.

So the following morning Camille Etiemble came and sat in his studio, and the hunchback took his colours and began to paint.

'Can't you keep them open?' presently he snarled.

The woman raised her great sorrowful eyes, and looked full at him. Her hollow cheek flushed. 'Pardon, monsieur,' she said quietly. But soon the colour faded, and again her lids sank low.

'Look here!' cried Pierre, exasperated, 'what's the matter with you? *Bon Dieu*—she's fainting!'

In truth she was. The purple rings beneath her eyes had deepened, and her face was ghastly white.

He rose.

'Here, drink this,' he said, pouring some water into a tumbler and putting it to her lips. 'D'you often faint? Are you ill?'

'No,' she replied presently, setting down the glass; 'thank you, monsieur. I am not ill—and the water has refreshed me.'

Pierre regarded her critically.

'Have you had any breakfast?' he inquired bluntly.

The woman hesitated. 'Not to-day,' at last unwillingly she said.

Stretching out his hand to a cupboard, the hunchback opened it and peered in. It contained a stale roll and a small piece of cheese. These, with a diminutive bottle of oil and a mouldy crust—destined to find its last resting-place beneath Monton's jaws—represented Pierre Merlin's entire larder.

He was a mean little man.

'Here,' he said grudgingly, dividing the bread with his clasp-knife. 'I don't want you fainting all the morning!—get your breakfast before you come another day.' And he brought her half between his painty fingers.

'Merci, je n'en ai pas besoin,' she rejoined coldly, and there was a flash of scorn in her expression.

'Eat it!' commanded Pierre gruffly. 'You shall have some cheese.' And he went and brought it her—on a plate.

'Fools these women are!' he crossly reflected.

But he waited until she had finished.

'Now?' he said, at last.

'I am quite well again—thank you.'

All the morning he painted her, and Monton lay curled at her feet.

The deep intense brown of her eyes, the relative sizes of iris and pupil, the droop of the long-lashed lids—all progressed favourably; but beyond—beyond lay the unknown thing, and that the hunchback could not grasp.

But in time he *would* find it—and if anywhere in this woman's eyes. Oh! he was not at all discouraged, if only she wouldn't bother him with her faints and fusses. And he bade her good morning almost with a smile.

The next day she came again, and the next and the next, and always she sat and gazed at him till he knew her face by heart; till at last, wherever he went, day or night, her great sorrowful eyes haunted him, like the eyes of a dying Christ. He began to feel afraid of this woman. Still he painted her, looking upwards, sideways, downwards, every way—in vain!

She rarely spoke unless he first addressed her, but one day she remarked abruptly, 'You are a very selfish man, Monsieur Merlin.'

Pierre stared.

'And you are trying to paint me,' she continued musingly; 'but you cannot, not till you have lived—never.'

'You talk too much,' he said insolently; 'turn more towards the left; so—if you please!'

She smiled a little scornful, half-pitying smile, and made no answer.

And the days went by.

Thus far Pierre, somewhat to his surprise, had not again

encountered the great man who had visited him at Dinan, though he had promised to call upon the hunchback directly he reached Paris. Pierre, with instinctive pride, had shrunk from reminding him of this contract.

But one afternoon, as he sat alone in his eye-lined room, a sealed packet was brought to him, addressed in M. Foin's handwriting. His late master, said the bearer, had passed away during the previous night, after an illness of some weeks ; and only the morning before his death had himself written the letter the servant handed to Pierre.

Then, ere the artist recovered from his surprise at the sadly unexpected news, the messenger withdrew.

Pierre Merlin opened the packet and took forth two envelopes. In the first was contained the following letter :—

‘MY FRIEND,—You may wonder at receiving no news of me, but my days are numbered, and God wills to take me hence, ere I have rendered you the service that I would. I would help you—my money, I leave to the poor ; but to you, poor neither in purse nor spirit, I bequeath, in the words of a dying saint, the secret of my success. May God in His mercy lead you from the darkness of Egotism into the glorious light of Brotherly Love !

‘HENRI FOIN.’

The hunchback paused, and his brows contracted as the curious letter fell from his hand. Then with an impatient movement he broke the seal of the remaining envelope, and drew forth three narrow strips of parchment, with a single line inscribed on each.

The first was—

‘*Have a great purpose in life.*’

And the second was—

‘*Strive to please God.*’

And the third was—

‘*Shine for Him.*’

That was all. And when he had read them, this artist, he crunched them angrily in his hand and pushed them anyhow into a drawer full of dirty painting-rags. Then, reseating himself beside his empty hearth, he uttered one word. It was not a good word.

PART III.

‘MY mother is dying ; for the love of God, monsieur, come and help me !’

It was Camille who spoke, standing on the artist’s threshold, her large eyes alight with the anguish of acute anxiety, her lips quivering.

Pierre, reading the evening paper, started at her voice.

‘Well, what the devil’s she here for ?’ he growled mentally.

But in the face of those tear-trembling eyes, whose memory was ever haunting him, he could not altogether refuse to listen.

‘I—— What can I do ? I’m very sorry for you,’ he said lamely, shuffling with the paper.

‘Come !’ she cried, seizing him in her excitement by the arm ; ‘help me—the doctor is there, and oh ! she will die !’

There was a ring of imperious despair in her shaking voice.

What could he do ? Silently he rose and followed her—he, the hunchback, the self-lover—through the busy gas-lit streets and crowded courts, to a wretched room in a lodging-house, where Camille and her parent dwelt.

‘What made you fetch *me* ?’ he asked half roughly as they climbed the stone stairway.

‘I don’t know—I didn’t think of calling any one else,’ she answered simply.

A strange sensation of something akin to gratification possessed him as he followed her into the low, half-lighted chamber.

There, tossing and muttering on a miserable pallet, lay a woman resembling so strikingly a more time-worn Camille, that Pierre involuntarily emitted an exclamation of surprise. At the sound the grave-faced medical bending over her turned, and in a low tone addressed himself to Camille.

‘Through the night she may become more delirious—you cannot be alone ; this gentleman is used to nursing ? He will stop ?’ the hunchback heard him ask.

‘Yes,’ she said, ‘he will stop.’

Pierre turned, but ere his lips could frame a remonstrance the doctor was gone.

All that autumn evening, all through a longer night, he watched with her beside the suffering woman. And through the distant roar and hum of street traffic he heard ever recurringly his dead friend’s precepts ringing in his ears. Which

of them had he ever practised ? Vainly, impatiently, as he watched beside the sick, did he strive to forget them.

He felt strangely out of his element in that sick-room ; but he did his best.

Ever and anon the patient would spring up in delirious fury, and fixing on him eyes like those of a soulless Camille would entreat him to remove the phantoms tormenting her fevered brain. Then, in a clumsy, shambling way, whilst her daughter sought a cooling drink for her, Pierre would smooth her pillow and try to make her rest. Through the night, and all the next day, they watched beside her in almost total silence. The hunchback accepted the situation tacitly, and though once or twice he thought regretfully of the time he was 'wasting,' did not suggest leaving.

Towards evening Camille, wan with watching, begged him to go and get some provisions for them. The invalid seemed to rally a little, and disposed to sleep, and the doctor, who had just called, spoke more hopefully of the case.

'You look as ill as your mother !' observed Pierre briefly. 'Rest awhile when she sleeps.' And he went out.

Ere his return to the little lodging, dusk had set in ; the fire he had kindled before starting shed its lambent light through the room, playing over the white face of the dozing patient and upon that of Camille, as, leaning back in her chair, her tired lids sunken, her thin face outlined sharply against the fire-lit, whitewashed wall, she slept.

The artist paused, and forgot, for the first time in his life, the very existence of Pierre Merlin, in the terror with which the girl's ghastly face inspired him.

He approached, and softly spoke her name. She answered not. Taking the limply hanging hand, its death-like chilliness frightened him. 'Camille !' he cried aloud in fear, oblivious of the sleeping invalid.

She opened her eyes then, looking into his with a childish sort of wonder and concern—a glance from which all scorn was purged—and as she looked Pierre felt the slumbering depths of his noumenal Self awaken, for he knew that he loved her. The girl put up her thin hand and caressed his rough hair tenderly. 'So ! You have found it out,' she said quietly. 'I knew long ago—and that was why I fetched you in my trouble.'

And the hunchback's breath came fast, and he stretched out

his arms to take her in a quick, half-furtive way; and the mother awoke, and gazed on them with eyes like the copies he had made of Camille's—and suddenly he understood.

The younger woman hastened to the bedside. The patient's pulse was more even, her temperature lower.

'The crisis is passed,' said the doctor when he came, 'and she will sleep, off and on, for many hours.'

'You must rest to-night; I will watch beside her,' said Pierre authoritatively to Camille as the hour grew late.

So, unwillingly she laid herself down, while he stationed himself beside the invalid, to sit and think. The events of the past two days crowded in upon him, like unfamiliar spirits, frightening yet bewitching him. And she—he looked towards the sleeping girl across the room—how she had changed everything! He *would* change; in the light of this new revelation he would do some good in the world; and the dead man's maxims should be his own. Camille should help him, and together they would bear his wider aims into realisation. He bent a moment to listen to the sick woman's even breathing, and then—and then, gradually, overcome by the fatigue of his long vigil, Pierre Merlin fell asleep. They all three slept, but he woke last. Dawn was breaking ere he aroused with a shiver, and looked about him.

The invalid, though now again slumbering, had evidently been awake, for an emptied medicine phial lay on the coverlet. Camille must have placed it there; how careless he had been! Turning, he glanced towards her couch, then uttered an exclamation of alarm. The girl lay still and rigid, her lips smiled peacefully, and her dark, sad eyes were wide.

Pierre knelt beside her. "Camille, beloved, awake!" he cried, as he took her icy hand between his own. But she did not hear. Slowly, agonisingly, he understood—she was dead! He took her in his arms, and covered her still pure face with fierce, despairing kisses. He called to her, stroking the luxuriant hair resting against her chilly temples; and as he looked into those fixed dead eyes—the dear eyes he had watched and striven to imitate—Pierre Merlin, the egotist, the miser, felt he would have given his best years—his life, his all—to bring her back. Bitter, resistless tears fell from his hard little eyes and lay glistening in the broadening daylight amongst the dead woman's dusky hair. And Paris woke up, and Pierre sat on with his silent burden, and the

woman in the shabby bed slept still, a long, health-giving sleep.

Hours went by, and the doctor came and tried to rouse Pierre, and force him to relinquish the form he clutched so closely ; but the hunchback only drew it nearer, and cast up a look of silent entreaty, like a thing in pain.

They said, afterwards, she had died of heart disease, but Pierre repeated sullenly, again and again, 'She didn't—I killed her ; I slept instead of watching ; she was tired, and she died.'

* * * * *

That was all a long time ago.

There is a great artist in Paris to-day, and he is a hunchback ; he paints eyes, and the people rave about this rich, eccentric man. But he doesn't heed. His art is living, real, in the psychal intensity of its individuality ; but the Parisians say his eyes are all so sad, they haunt them.

As of yore, they fear him, but differently. Frequently his deeds are mean, but as often, in a slinking, shamefaced way, he makes amends. Beggars crowd round him, and at times he will drive them off in savage aggravation, to recall them later, and fling away his money with a stern apathy.

There is a neat cottage, out beyond the city, where he supports an aged, querulous woman, whom he styles 'mother.' Often she scolds at and reproaches him, but he never says anything back.

Fits of melancholy oppress him from time to time, periods when every faculty but that for suffering seems benumbed. Then he will go forth alone, to stand silently for hours beside a quiet grave in a neighbouring cemetery. There is a fair, white cross erected, and upon it is inscribed the one word 'Camille.' And at its foot are three familiar lines engraved. This is Pierre Merlin's shrine, and the dead woman's name and the great man's maxims form his creed. Looked at as he regarded them, many folks may have a worse.

The hunchback is a successful man ; the glory he dreamed of is his own—all Paris his admirer. But beyond, and higher, shines for him through this earth-life's mists, an Ideal he is but slowly realising, and towards which he is groping day by day.

THE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

WHEN William the Conqueror built a castle upon the hill at Wyndlesore in the year 1067 neither he nor his followers could have foreseen that he was laying the foundation of the most famous royal residence in Europe. Probably the thought of Falaise, his fortress birthplace upon the little tanning stream in distant Normandy, was uppermost in the king's mind when he selected the gentle eminence in the broad valley of the Thames for his abode in his new country. His youngest son, Henry I., increased and beautified the castle, and it owes most of its importance and dignity to the last great Plantagenet descendant of this prince, Edward III. Windsor is indissolubly associated with Edward's memory ; for not only did he rebuild the greater portion of the castle, but fixed for ever in the very heart of it his world-famed institution of chivalry, the most Noble and Illustrious Order of the Garter.

The desire of King Edward had first been to revive the Knights of the Round Table, said to have been instituted in the sixth century by King Arthur. Efforts had been made at various times to resuscitate the legendary splendours of that Order, and in 1345 a celebration of it was held at Windsor. In the following year it was decreed that a similar feast should be held annually at Whitsuntide. But the jealousy shown by his adversary, Philip VI., in setting up a rival Round Table in France, seems to have damped King Edward's ardour for the revival of Arthur's institution, and he took advantage of the peace—or rather the truce—between the two countries which followed the victory at Crécy and the capture of Calais, to formulate, in the year 1350, a scheme for the foundation of the Order of the Garter, which has the distinction of being the most ancient of the three military orders of chivalry which have continued to exist in Europe down to the present century.

Passing over as mere gossip, retailed many years after by

Polydore Virgil and other chroniclers, the story of the Countess of Salisbury's garter, we may infer that Edward chose the garter as the emblem of his Order partly because he had used his own garter as a signal of battle at Crécy in August, 1346, and partly because he designed it to serve as a badge of the unity and concord existing between himself and his twenty-five knights-companions. The very motto he adopted for the garter—'Honi soit qui mal y pense'—may well be considered as a challenge to the envious spirit in which such an institution might be received by the large number of knights passed over in the king's selection.

The patrons of the Order were the Holy Trinity, the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Edward the Confessor, and St. George, the famous Cappadocian warrior, who had been specially honoured in Britain, if legend may be trusted, from the days of King Arthur. Richard Cœur de Lion had invoked the aid and mediation of St. George in the Holy Land, and King Edward had called on him at the battle of Crécy.

On instituting the Order Edward laid down certain rules for its government. No one could be admitted to it unless he were a gentleman of blood and a knight without reproach. All the knights, except such as were excused for some special reason, were bound to come to Windsor annually for three days, to keep the feast of St. George (April 23rd), unless that feast fell within the Quindene of Easter, in which case its celebration was to be postponed until the third Sunday after Easter. Good Friday was also of course a day on which the feast could not be held.

Vacancies in the Order were to be filled up within six weeks, the Knights-Companions meeting the sovereign at some convenient place appointed by him for this purpose, not necessarily Windsor. No election could take place unless six Knights-Companions were present. Each knight had the privilege of naming nine candidates, three earls (or of sublimer title), three barons, and three Knights-Bachelors. It was enjoined that the sovereign should select the knight who obtained the most 'voices' or votes, or the one whom he should esteem the most beneficial to the crown and kingdom. The Knight-Companion elect was to have the garter sent to him immediately, but he was not to have the mantle until he took possession of his stall, neither were his sword and helmet to be placed over his stall before his coming. As time went on

it became the custom for the sovereign to nominate persons to the vacant stalls, and for the Knights-Companions to elect them as a matter of course.

Foreigners could be elected into the Order as Knights-Companions on the nomination of the sovereign. In the case of such an election both garter and mantle were to be sent at the sovereign's charge to the knight chosen, who, if he accepted the dignity, was bound to come to be installed, or to send a proxy within eight months. The proxy was installed by having the mantle put upon his right shoulder, but he was not entitled to vote in the chapter of the Order. It was decreed by the statutes that on the death of the first members of the Order plates of metal, containing their arms, should be fixed upon the back of their stalls. Their successors were to have similar plates, but smaller, affixed below these upon their demise. Certain dues were to be paid by the Knights-Companions according to their respective rank, at their installation, when their achievements, *i.e.*, their banner, sword, helmet, and crest, were set up over their seat in St. George's Chapel.

When King Henry I. erected a chapel in the castle of Windsor he dedicated it to St. Edward the Confessor, and founded a college of eight canons to serve it. Edward III. rebuilt and rededicated the chapel in 1349, adding fifteen canons to the original eight, and appointing a *custos*, or dean. The college was finally settled at twelve canons, the *custos*, thirteen priests or vicars, four clerks, and six choristers. Twenty-six Alms-Knights were appointed at the same time.

In the succeeding century Edward IV. amplified the provisions of his great-great-grandfather, giving the corporate body the name of the dean and canons of the Free Chapel of Windsor, and causing an Act of Parliament to be passed confirming them in their rights and privileges. The number of clerks and choristers was increased to twenty-six. This king also greatly enlarged the chapel—a work continued under Henry VII. and Henry VIII.

Payments for maintenance, frequently revised, and suitable lodgings within the precincts of Windsor Castle, were allotted to the dean and canons and to the Alms-Knights on the institution of the college. The Alms-Knights, or *Milites Pauperes*, were ordained by the statutes to be such as 'through adverse turns of fortune were reduced to that extremity' that they had not wherewithal to live genteely as was suited for a military

condition.' In course of time considerable disputes arose between the Alms-Knights and the dean and canons on the subject of maintenance, and in the reign of Edward IV. it was enacted in the Act of Parliament previously mentioned that the dean and canons should be 'for evermore utterly quit and discharged from all manner of exhibition or charge of and for any of the said knights.'

The dean and chapter appear after this to have given pensions of their own free will to certain Alms-Knights, though how the rest subsisted we know not. Henry VIII., under the circumstances, reduced the number to thirteen, and in his will left lands to the value of £600 a year for their maintenance. Queen Mary re-erected three houses belonging to them, and her sister Elizabeth drew up a code of rules for the guidance of the Alms-Knights. The knights were chosen by the sovereign, who selected one to be their governor, subject to the authority of the deans and canons. A quaint rule to the effect that on the coming or going of the sovereign the knights should stand before their doors in their apparel—*i.e.*, their mantles and surcoats—and do obedience, may well be noticed. In the time of Charles I. the number of knights was raised to eighteen by the benefaction of Sir Francis Crane, Chancellor of the Garter, and of Sir Peter Le Maire.

The college possessed considerable property in land from its foundation, including many advowsons. The first grant of the latter by Edward III. comprised Wraysbury in the diocese of Lincoln, South Tawton in Exeter, and Uttoxeter in Coventry-and-Lichfield. Numerous grants of manors in the valley of the Thames, and in fact all over the country, were made to the college by Edward III. and his successors. In accordance with the will of Henry VIII., Edward VI. handed over to the dean and canons many more rectories and ecclesiastical benefices, including upwards of a dozen in Devon and Cornwall. The college enjoyed exemption from all dues to the State, and absolute freedom from ecclesiastical jurisdiction, owing obedience to the sovereign alone.

It was ordained by the original statutes of the Garter that a registrar should be appointed to keep the records of the Order. Whatever matter had been registered during the year was to be recited before the sovereign and Companions at the chapter on the vigil of St. George's feast, so that entries might, if necessary, be corrected or amended.

The registrar was always a canon of Windsor, though not always the dean, down to the time of Charles I., when it was enacted in a chapter held at Whitehall, April 22, 1636, that the office should be permanently vested in the Dean of Windsor.

The work of the registrar may be regarded as one of the greatest permanent services in connection with it. A copy of the statutes, signed with the common seal of the Order, had to be given to each Knight-Companion on his election. His executors were enjoined to send it back to the *custos* after his death. The statutes seem at first to have been written upon a scroll in Latin. The original scroll disappeared very early, but a transcript of it, made in the reign of Henry V., called the *Registrum Chartaceum*, an old paper book written in French, was in existence in the State Paper Office at Whitehall, in the time of Ashmole. He made a copy of it, which is preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, but the book itself has been lost. It was begun in 1414, by John Coningham, Canon of Windsor, and Registrar of the Order, and was carried down to the 31st year of Henry VIII. by succeeding registrars.

The Black Book, bound in black velvet, and written on vellum, covers much the same ground as the *Registrum Chartaceum*, except that it is continued a few years further, *i.e.*, to the end of the reign of Edward VI. The next register, called the Blue Book, is bound in blue velvet, and contains entries from the first year of Queen Mary, until the eighteenth year of James I. Then follows the Red Book, bound in red velvet, down to the fourteenth year of Charles I. This book was mostly compiled by the brothers Matthew and Christopher Wren, successive Deans of Windsor, and Registrars of the Order. The *Liber Carolinus*, bound in red Turkey leather, continues the record down to 1688. The *Liber Aureus*, bound in yellow leather, goes down to 1804, and similar books follow it. After the death of George II., the entries cease to be in Latin.

To describe the insignia of the various memoirs of the Order of the Garter would almost fill a volume. The garter and mantle were ordered to be worn, the former always, the latter on official occasions, by the Knights-Companions from the foundation of the Order, but the collar and the George were expressly assigned to them by Henry VIII. A surcoat and hood, or chaperon, were added to the mantle soon after the institution of the Order. The garter was always worn upon

the left leg, a little below the knee. It had a golden buckle, and was composed of blue silk or velvet, with the motto, 'Honi soit qui mal y pense' either richly embroidered, or wrought in precious stones around it. The garters worn by the sovereign, or presented by him to foreign princes, were often very magnificent, but all the garters, of whatever composed, had a general resemblance in design and execution.

The mantle, a loose flowing robe, was at first made of woollen cloth, and later of silk or velvet. The colour of the mantle was ordered to be blue, adorned with the arms of St. George, *i.e.*, argent, a cross gules, surrounded by a garter, on the left shoulder.

At the grand feast in the second year of his reign, Charles I. ordained that the sovereign and the Knights-Companions, and the prelate and the chancellor, should at all times wear the cross of the Order, surrounded by a garter, on the left side of their coats or riding cassocks as a sign of membership, but shortly after the king added 'certain beams of silver that shot out in the form of a cross' beyond the encompassing garter. Thus was introduced the meaningless star of eight points, as it has been called, which has ever since remained the most generally recognised badge of the Order.

Although the collar and the George were expressly laid down by Henry VIII. as part of the habit, there is little doubt that these ornaments had been used by the Knights-Companions in the previous reign, and perhaps earlier.

The collar, as ordained by Henry VIII., consists of twenty-six double Tudor roses, each within a garter, made of gold, and enamelled in the proper colours, fastened together with the same number of golden knots. A figure of St. George on horseback, slaying the dragon with his spear, called the Great George, depends from one of the Rose and Garter medallions. It was expressly forbidden to enrich the collar with precious stones, but the George might be encrusted with gems, according to the pleasure of individual Knights-Companions.

The lesser George, an oval plate of gold, or sometimes of agate or onyx stone—on which St. George is represented in relief with a drawn sword raised in his hand to slay the dragon beneath his horse's feet—surrounded by a garter, was also ordained by Henry VIII. in the thirteenth year of his reign, to be worn on a chain or ribbon by the Knights-Companions on all ordinary occasions. The chain in time gave way to the

ribbon, which was at first black, and afterwards blue. The lesser George weighed, as a rule, under two ounces, the Great George and collar about thirty ounces.

The reigning sovereign, whether male or female, has always been the chief of the Order. One of the first acts of Queen Mary was to summon a chapter at St. James's, September 27, 1553, for the purpose of abrogating, expunging, and erasing from the statutes all the alterations made by her brother, Edward VI., in the preceding March, as 'inconvenient, impertinent, and tending to novelty.' Directly after she was married to Philip II. of Spain, he was created joint Sovereign of the Garter with his wife. They occupied one stall (the sovereign's) at his installation in St. George's Chapel. Queen Elizabeth, on her accession, gave her brother-in-law another stall, but she confirmed the statutes as settled by her father and his predecessors.

In the succeeding century William and Mary became in like manner joint sovereigns of the Order. The custom in both cases seems to have been for the king to preside alone at feasts and installations, but for the queen to take her husband's place during his absence from the realm.

With the tendency to lean upon others characteristic of her, Queen Anne asked the advice of the Knights-Companions on the manner of wearing the insignia. They were of opinion that she should wear the George from a riband at her neck, the Garter on her left arm, and the star on her breast. Thus adorned, she assumed her stall on March 13, 1702, at the installation of the young Duke of Bedford in person, and of John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, by proxy.

For a couple of centuries the celebration of St. George's feast, which lasted three days, was the greatest event in all the year at Windsor. There were no celebrations of the grand feast in the reign of Edward VI., and Queen Elizabeth, notwithstanding her zeal for the preservation of the statutes of the Order, decreed, with the consent of the Knights-Companions, that the feast might be kept at whatever place the sovereign should happen to be on the vigil and day of St. George. It is stated by Ashmole that, as a matter of fact, she only kept one feast at Windsor.

At the time of the Great Rebellion Charles I. held feasts and chapters at York and Oxford; and during the interregnum, ceremonies in connection with the Order were observed at

Saint Germain and elsewhere. Wherever the grand feast was kept, and especially at Windsor, great care was taken in adorning the chapel for the religious ceremonies, and in furnishing St. George's Hall, or any other place, for the grand dinner in a rich and costly manner.

According to Ashmole, James I. noting that very little plate and other ornaments remained in the chapel at Windsor since the 'disposal' of the vessels *temp.* Henry VIII. and Edward VI., was pleased to make some provisions for its better adornment. The thrifty king does not seem to have given anything special himself, but at a chapter held at Whitehall, in the sixteenth year of his reign, it was decreed that every Knight-Companion should present a piece of plate, for the use of the altar of St. George's Chapel, of the value of £20 at least. The inventory taken in the reign of Charles I. included four candlesticks, two chalices, and three basins, of the aggregate value of £739, at 12s. per ounce, and two large water-pots, value £232, at the same rate per ounce, presented by Charles, Prince of Wales, at his installation in 1636. As all these treasures had been rifled or taken away by the Parliamentary Army during the troubles, Charles II., in 1667, by the consent of the Knights-Companions, 'did levy and collect, and of his bounty furnish the Chapel' with a quantity of handsome plate, including a large pair of taper candlesticks, weighing 264 ounces.

The Georgian era seems to have been a fading time for the glory of the Order generally. Old customs were gradually given up, and Windsor, if still a stately place, became inexpressibly humdrum under the rule of the Farmer King and his homely spouse. The condition of the Alms-Knights went from bad to worse, nor was it much improved when William IV. altered their title to Military Knights of Windsor, and their picturesque cloaks and tunics to a stiff, epauletted uniform, surmounted by a cocked hat. The undress uniform—*de rigueur* in chapel on Litany days—is blue with shoulder-scales, and the full dress scarlet. The latter is worn on Sundays, festivals, and installations. Attendance at chapel is not, however, now compulsory, except at the latter functions. Each Military Knight has a stall in the lowest of the three rows in the choir of St. George's Chapel.

The monetary troubles of the knights have continued down to our own day. In 1858 they went to law with the dean and chapter, and lost their case only through a technical flaw.

The dean and chapter thereupon suppressed a canonry, and raised the income of the thirteen knights of the Upper Foundation to £120 a year. The five knights of the Lower Foundation—that of Sir Francis Crane, *vide supra*—receive about £50 a year, but their quarters are superior to those of their upper brethren.

No chapter of the Garter has been held since 1855, when Queen Victoria invested the Emperor Louis Napoleon with the Riband and Insignia at Windsor. If it is still a coveted distinction amongst a select few, membership of the Order, as Lord Melbourne noted with profound satisfaction, has now none of 'that infernal thing they call merit' about it—but more's the pity! The Riband, once a mere string for the suspension of the lesser George, has, nearly ever since the date of the last chapter, been of signal service in giving a touch of exquisite colour to the sombre robes of the sovereign when she appears on State occasions. At this point of anti-climax in its history we may well take leave of a great institution of chivalry founded by one of her Majesty's most illustrious ancestors.

GRACE JOHNSTONE.

THE STRONG GOD CIRCUMSTANCE.

BY HELEN SHIPTON, AUTHOR OF 'THE HERONS,' 'DAGMAR,' ETC.

BOOK II.

'OF THE WILL OF THE PRINCESS.'

CHAPTER XV.

'How pleasant life will be without scruples!'

'Flower o' the peach!

Death for us all, and his own life for each.'

FOR Arthur Kenyon, as well as for Redmond and Vanessa, that July day had been a long and a memorable one.

It is to be supposed that many a time since their meeting in London he had thought of Theodore Waterlow and of his proposed bargain; and it may be that he had also speculated as to whether it would be possible to avail himself of the young man's confession without agreeing to his terms.

But Arthur had been reluctantly compelled to believe that it would *not*. Granted that George Watson might be prevailed upon to tell the same tale—what would men think but that he was now what he had professed himself to be before, a convenient tool? His word alone would not be enough; and to the world at large it would only mean a renewal of the scandal, made worse by a futile attempt to cast the blame upon another man.

Besides, if any public inquiry took place, the truth as to George Watson's sister must come to light, and probably her present abode as well; and all the harm that Arthur flattered himself he had prevented might come to pass after all.

No! there was nothing to be done, bitter as it was to think so; and life was only a little harder for the often-recurring necessity of convincing himself that there was really nothing ~~that~~ he could do.

But that morning the postman had left at Cross Rigg a letter from Theodore Waterlow—the briefest of epistles, without any formal opening—

‘Do you still refuse my offer? I am still searching, and it is inevitable that I should succeed, for people cannot disappear altogether, except in one way; and I know that the girl is alive, and that I shall find her. But I want to go abroad at once, and to save time I will do what I said. Tell me where she is, and you shall have the document I spoke of.

‘THEODORE WATERLOW.’

Arthur crumpled the letter together and flung it into the empty grate; then took it out again and tore it into small pieces. But he could not forget it so easily. All day, as he went about his work, a voice seemed to be whispering in his ear—

‘He will find her, of course, as he says! It is not possible that she should be hidden much longer; and she will go off with him, like a fool, to her ruin; and you will be left as you are to your life’s end!’

All day the voice went with him, and he listened to it, as one listens to a friend who reiterates advice that one does not mean to take. But when evening came the suggestion, whatever it was, took a totally different tone.

He was going to his bedroom, and as he stepped into the ante-chamber he saw that the door above was open, as usual, and from the western window beyond the whole space was flooded with red light.

In a moment the glow was fading, for the evening was somewhat stormy, and the sun had but looked out for a moment from among the clouds. But it had lasted long enough to bring back that evening of his first arrival, nearly a year ago, and all that had passed since; and somehow, strangely enough, the months looked more dreary in the retrospect than they had done in passing.

His very soul within him seemed to recoil from the thought of such another year—of twenty or thirty or forty years—disgraced and obscure and alone.

And now not a voice from without but his very inmost self cried out and said, ‘I will not bear it! Altruism has its limits. *They* know what they are doing. The shame of the price he

asks is his, not mine—the ruin she goes to will be of her own choosing, for she has been fairly warned. But I will take back my good name and my place in the world—and who dare say I do wrong ?’

He stood still where he was, in the dusky little ante-chamber. A necessity seemed to be laid upon him to make up his mind before he quitted the spot on which he stood. Here, where his fate had so often pressed so hardly upon him, he must make firm the resolve by which alone he might escape from it.

‘Yes, or no ; it must be settled now,’ said Arthur to himself.

‘*And I say—yes !* Let me sin the whole sin, if it be one, and get the good of it without reserve. Sin or not, I am past caring—it is the price of my life, and I must pay it !’

The red glow had died out of the window above his head, but now there came a last yellow gleam of sunlight, wild and watery. And with the light came a sound of some one moving in that room, and a soft voice humming some indistinguishable fragment of an old song.

And the next moment Lesley appeared in the open doorway, with the sunlight making a glory behind her head.

She started a little as she saw Arthur standing there motionless ; then smiled, and cautiously came down the narrow steps.

As she reached the bottom of the flight she looked again, but did not smile, for something in the eyes that met hers startled and perplexed her. A warmer colour glowed through the lovely rich brown of her cheek, and her dark eyes widened and deepened till they looked like those of a startled deer. She stopped an instant as though he had spoken to her, then dropped her eyes and moved a little aside, and went by without a word. And still Arthur did not move.

A new perception of her beauty had thrilled through him as she passed by. He *knew* now what he had more than suspected before—knew that he loved her.

But it was as if he had tasted of some forbidden fruit, and knew the evil as well as the good of love. The love that he had hitherto repressed and ignored had belonged chiefly to the spiritual side of his nature, but now there suddenly woke and leaped up to reinforce it another feeling altogether.

And that masterful voice spoke again, and said, ‘*I will have this too !* When I take back my life, I will take bonnie Lesley too. Here the devil flung her into my arms, and I will take

and keep her, in spite of God or man. . . . What scruples shall I have left when I have trafficked in a woman's honour, and changed open disgrace for secret shame? . . . And—*how pleasant life will be without scruples!*

A fierce joy and longing thrilled through his veins, like some glorious maddening elixir of life, that went 'cold and hot to the heart like wine!'

But still he did not move, except to sit down upon one of the lower steps, and rest his chin upon his hands and look with fixed, unseeing eyes into one of the fast-darkening corners. If he had been in the mood for mental analysis, which he was not, he could have confessed now the force of certain theories which he had been used to think were compounded at least as much of affectation as of wickedness—to wit, that the full gain of life is only known to those who taste *all* its emotions, and that in fact the devil spoke no more than truth when he said that to know both good and evil was to be 'as gods.'

Freedom—power—the life for which he was made—he could grasp them all again; and as for the act by which he must purchase them, that was, in a sense, the sign of his enfranchisement, for by it he would pass the Rubicon. There could be no hesitation after that; the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; he might satisfy them all to the full and yet sink no lower. He would be free; and freedom is divine, though Satan-himself unlock the prison-door.

Arthur Kenyon was lingering now in that dim ante-chamber less because he had not made up his mind, than because the world that seemed now to lie before him was so new that it was action enough to try to realise it. All his life he had despised men who put their hands to any kind of plough and looked back, who chose any course and regretted the other road which they might not tread. Before he left that place he meant to have taken farewell of all that he must cast behind him; to have resolved upon all that he must do, and all that he might grasp and hold. If he was in very deed selling his soul, he was one who would at least reckon up the price of it and exact it to the uttermost farthing.

* * * * *

The light was dying out of the room beyond, and the little chamber was almost dark. To the fancy of its present tenant its dusky walls were splendid with the moving pageant of Life—

a full, successful life in the world of picturesque scenes and large interests. But little by little these visions shifted, changed, vanished ; and what he saw there was what he had imagined so often when he lay ill in that room above.

A worn, death-pale face on the pillow beneath its antique canopy—the rigid features set in lines that seemed to crave some friendly hand for decency's sake to smooth them out and close the staring eyes. On the floor there, close at his feet, a bulky, huddled figure, prostrate and shapeless in the gloom. And on the stairs between them a Presence — malign, triumphant, hateful rather than terrible—Sintram's 'Little Master' rather than Milton's Revolted Spirit.

Clear as the vision was, the man to whom it came did not even think that he saw it with his bodily eyes. He had not turned his head towards the door, or moved his gaze from that dark, empty corner ; but sat motionless and perceived it with some sense more subtle than sight.

The Presence had no form, no features ; only a being and an expression—triumph and mockery, contempt and malevolence—Essential Evil blending and overpowering all the rest.

And little by little, as his imagination focussed itself upon it, the other figures and the personages in the old-world story vanished ; and Arthur Kenyon knew that It was looking, with that look still unchanged, upon *him*.

'Mr. Kenyon ! Mr. Kenyon !'

It was Lesley's voice, and it came like the note of a thrush at day-dawn breaking through a sick man's nightmare-ridden dream.

Arthur started to his feet, but for the moment did not answer, dazed between the outer and the inner worlds that were equally present to his consciousness.

He moved quickly towards the door, with a sort of impulse to prevent Lesley from entering that place ; and the next instant the clear call was heard again, and the girl stood in the outer room, with a candle in one hand and in the other a folded paper.

She started at the sight of his face, which showed white and drawn in the candle-light, but she said—

'It's a little lad, Mr. Kenyon, that has just brought this. He says he has brought it from my cousin Valentine, and that it's very important.'

Arthur took the paper and unfolded it, while Lesley held the candle. As soon as he had finished reading it she was going to tell him, with the innocent freedom he had accustomed her to use, that she hoped it was nothing wanted at once, for he did not look fit to go out again that night. But the words died upon her lips, startled back by the change that came over the face that she was watching—the look of fierce elation that leapt into it.

He tossed his hand in the air with a half-uttered exclamation, then crumpled the paper and thrust it into his pocket, turned to the corner where he kept his walking-sticks and selected the heaviest, and was nearly at the door when he remembered Lesley.

'I beg your pardon,' he said ; 'it is all right ; nothing for you to worry yourself about, I mean—only your cousin wants me to have a share in a little diversion that is going on to-night. Ask your grandfather to leave the door unfastened for me as usual, but if I should not come back I shall probably be down at the Hall. Good-night, Lesley.'

It was very seldom that he called her by her name, being something of an adept in getting along without it, and having arrived at that state of feeling when a name means at once too much and too little. But he said 'Lesley' now, deliberately, and with intention, and did not wait till she had spoken her good-night in return.

This was what was written upon that scrap of paper that was crushed into Arthur's waistcoat pocket—

'SIR,—There is trouble going on to-night. Mr. Vaughan is going to have up the mains, and Waterlow and some of the chaps are to try and stop him. There will be a bit of fighting. If you could come down at once you might be able to do something.—Yours obed'tly, VALENTINE ELLIOT.'

Arthur smiled to himself, as he strode and ran alternately down the green lane, and recalled the vagueness of this document. If he had not happened to be with Redmond the night before on the discovery of those same mains he might not have been able to guess why and how the young Squire meant to 'have them up,' or where he himself was to come down to.

But now he could at any rate guess that Redmond was going to do something that a man of the world in his position

would not have attempted, and knowing what he did of the state of feeling among the navvies, Arthur could well believe that it would not be difficult to provoke them to 'a row.' What he ought to have found it more difficult to understand and account for was his own fierce and very unclerical delight at the prospect of this same disturbance.

But he was not attempting to do anything of the sort. All he knew was that out of that chamber, full of nameless Horror, from a conflict that was like the tearing asunder of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, he had been called suddenly into the clean, wholesome atmosphere of the everyday world, to do something that there was, thank Heaven! no doubt about. That there might be a spice of danger in the doing of it was one of its most agreeable features—he only wished that he could think that the danger was real and imminent. It was much to be released for that one night from the necessity of coming to a resolution; to be released from that necessity for ever would be much more, and perhaps, on the whole, the best thing that could happen to him.

He was glad that the call had come just when it did, as any man might be glad of an interruption that saved him from denying, under torture, the principles that until then he had lived by; but he could not forget that the torture was to be renewed to-morrow, and on the next day, and on the next; and he had no belief now in his own power to stand fast. To get knocked on the head to-night would be so much the best thing that could happen that the merest chance of it was enough to send him joyfully down into the valley, only hoping that the scrimmage might not be over before he arrived on the scene.

As for Valentine Elliot, he too had been dimly aware for several days past that he had come to a sort of crisis of his fate; and he had been slowly making up his mind to one course of action, only to find suddenly that that door was shut.

His love for Lesley had never blinded him to the fact that she did not care for him, except as one of her very few relations. But in his class a passionate attachment is not theoretically at all necessary to a reasonable and happy marriage; and he seemed to himself to have the sort of right to her that a man has to a treasure that he, and he alone, has

discovered. She must marry some day, and what rival had he to fear? Her aunt's bringing-up had made her too refined for her equals in station, and she was not the kind of girl to bid for notice from any one. At one time a very little would have made Valentine jealous of Redmond Vaughan, but the young Squire had been so scrupulously careful that jealousy itself could find nothing to feed upon.

She was so young in some ways, so innocent in all ways, that he dared not press her to marry him, but he had never made it a secret that he cared for her more than for anything else in the world. And he knew that at any rate she would not care for him the less because he was poor, and because his opinions kept him at war with most of his little world.

He had been well content to wait and see what time would do for him, but of late it had seemed that time was setting them further and further apart; and he began to perceive, and knew not how he perceived it, that Lesley had learned to think of Arthur Kenyon as he thought of her.

The instinct that warned him was not jealousy, such as he would have felt towards any other man in the world who lived under the same roof with Lesley, and might dwell also in her thoughts. He trusted both Lesley and Arthur implicitly; and though he could not have put it into words, he knew well enough by experience what is the desire of the moth for the star, and how little the star may have to do with it. It even seemed to him that this experience might soften Lesley's heart a little towards himself.

But it made it desirable, and perhaps possible, to take some kind of action at once; and meanwhile other impulses were pushing him in the same direction.

For some time he had known that there was mischief brewing among the men, and had considered very deeply as to what should be his own part when an outbreak was imminent. Half in jest he had promised to lead the men if ever they should make an organised attack upon the game, and to send word to the Squire of what they meant to do. But nothing of that sort had been mooted, and at this time of the year there was of course no game to raid, while the constant trespassing that went on, and the picking up of a rabbit here and there by any man who had a fancy that way, did not rise in Valentine's estimation to the dignity of warfare. Time had been when he picked up a rabbit or a hare himself whenever he thought such

a present would be acceptable to the people with whom he lodged, but he had given up the practice now that it had been vulgarised by some of the least congenial of his new associates. Moreover, he could not disguise from himself that now he did not wish to fight his 'cousin' any more than to desert his own comrades; and that he would prefer to remain neutral between them if it could be done with honour.

But the salt of life in Ashden had been to defy Redmond Vaughan, and to irritate the farmers; and now he no longer cared to do either. Valentine had never seriously considered the possibility of going abroad, just because he had always been told that it would be the best thing for him, but now, with the remnant of his boyish light-heartedness, he had lost that boyish perversity. And whereas the thought of Lesley had always been enough, if there had been no other reason, to keep his mind from wandering from the place of his birth, he began now to think that possibly it would be better for her as well as for himself to see Ashden and Cross Rigg no more.

If she was not happy, if she felt that she had set her liking where it could have no return, might she not be tempted with the thought of a new world and a new life?

'She never cared for me,' thought Valentine, 'but I could make her care, if I had her away where everything was strange. If she'll trust me and come, we'll forget my father and my grandfather, and let old scores be done with for evermore. I'll be as good as any one else, in America or Australia, and she shall be the lady she is; and I'll make her happy—if only she'll trust me and come.'

It seemed to him that he had nothing to wait for, except to screw his courage to the sticking-place, and to take Lesley, if possible, in the mood to find the present unendurable, and any change welcome.

And with that thought he went more often up to Cross Rigg than before, braving old Gideon Elliot's sardonic displeasure, and watching his opportunity.

But before it had come he made another discovery, not little by little, with suspicion growing stronger each day, as he had discovered the truth about Lesley; but with a suddenness that staggered his wits, and left all his thoughts reeling and groping in a mist of perplexity and despair.

It was all done in a moment. The incident was like a lightning flash, that is over before one has time to think whether

it means to shatter the roof-tree beneath which all one's treasures lie, but, like the flash, it showed Valentine what he could never again doubt or forget.

He was in the yard at Cross Rigg talking to Arthur Kenyon, whom he had met just coming through the door in the high stone wall that shut off the little strip of front garden from the farm premises. He had noticed with some disapproval that some one—probably the lad whom his grandfather had hired to assist at haying and harvest—had left the scythe carelessly leaning against the wall of the house, near the kitchen door. He would have moved it, but as his grandfather's discarded assistant he was shy of interfering, especially as the old man himself was busy just across the yard. And Mr. Kenyon for a wonder did not seem to have seen it.

In a moment a white kitten darted out of the house, closely pursued by a blundering collie puppy, and after them Lesley, intent on saving her favourite from the young dog's rough assault. Her foot struck the handle of the scythe, and it fell towards her. Both men sprang forward, and Arthur Kenyon being the nearest, caught it just before the sharp, heavy blade touched her.

That was all. Absorbed in her chase, Lesley hardly knew what it was that fell, and did not realise that she had been in any peril. Arthur Kenyon was looking after her, and Valentine was looking at *him*. He was two or three shades paler than usual, and instead of the little self-gratulatory smile that the other had expected to see, there was the shaken look of one who has seen Fate's heavy hand laid carelessly for an instant where the heart's jewel has its secret hiding-place.

Valentine had no words in which he could have described that look, but it stamped itself on his brain, so that if he had been an artist he could have reproduced it; and he knew what it meant only too well.

Neither of the men attempted to finish what he had been saying. Arthur took the scythe, and carried it across to the shed, and hung it carefully on its accustomed hooks, and when he came back to the place where they had been standing the other was gone.

And Valentine had swung out of the yard and up the road that led across the moor, dazed with the shock of his sudden discovery.

His thoughts were quivering on the balance, a feather's

weight would have turned them to furious distrust or jealous suspicion ; but some fine perception in himself prevented him from leaping at once to the conclusion that to many men would have seemed inevitable.

The more he thought of it, the more he inclined to trust Arthur Kenyon, if only for the sake of that night when they had met first, at the dying comrade's bedside. It could not be that the same man could open the gates of heaven for one, and the gates of hell for another !

But it was but a choice of evils after all. Valentine had always known that none but a gentleman could be his rival, and now here was the rival ; and if an honest one, so much, in one sense, the worse, for he would be irresistible.

A kind of alternative presented itself, a temptation that looked by turns more or less tempting. It was possible that Lesley might be his who spoke first ; that she might be hurried into a promise that she would be too honourable to break. If Valentine could tell Mr. Kenyon that she was his promised wife, his lips would be sealed, and Lesley would never guess at what he had felt for her, but, far away, might learn to forget him in time.

But neither could that temptation prevail. Valentine had more of his mother's steadfast pride about him than of his father's selfish passion ; and he knew that such a victory would never content him ; that what he had won by a trick and a lie would never seem to be really his own. Principle might have proved too weak, but a kind of moral fastidiousness came to his aid, and stronger than either was his unselfish love for the creature that he had always felt to be too good for him.

'If he loves her, and will be true to her, and marry her,' he said to himself at last, with reluctant, grudging, desperate earnestness, 'I can neither meddle nor make, and I should be a brute beast if I did. . . . Let her be happy in her own way, and God bless her. . . . Only, what is there left, in all the wide world, for *me* to do ?'

* * * * *

It was while Valentine was slowly comprehending so much of his own feelings that Redmond Vaughan was making the discovery that so perturbed him, and no one would have been more interested to hear of his discovery and of his consequent resolve than the young fellow who occupied a somewhat

unenviable position between the opposing parties, and had already that upon his mind which might well make him reckless and desperate.

Knowing even less of legal procedure and of Acts of Parliament than did the owner of Lassington, Valentine had often wondered what would happen if the Company attempted to take the mains across Mr. Vaughan's land. He had asked some of the men most experienced on public works, and was told by them that the undertaking, once begun, would go forward whatever any landowner might say; upon which Valentine made no comment, but thought to himself with an odd sort of pride that they had never before had to deal with a Vaughan of Lassington. After all, before it was made known on the embankment, he heard of the resistance that was to be offered to the Company's proceedings; for one of the young men whom Redmond had called upon when he levied his band of volunteers was a special ally of Valentine's, and immediately on receiving the summons strolled down to the works and told him privately what was going on.

Valentine's face darkened, and he said very little in reply, but curtly advised his friend to keep a still tongue and to hit his hardest when the time came.

Then, when the young fellow was gone, Valentine applied his wits to settling a question of honour. Was he, or was he not, bound to lead the men if they should oppose the young Squire's action that night? That they would oppose it he was pretty sure. For some reason they were bitter enough against Redmond Vaughan to believe that he had a personal spite against them; and they would understand this as an attempt on his part to stop the work and to take the bread out of their mouths. Moreover, there were plenty of wild spirits among them who would enjoy a row whatever pretext might be found for it.

Valentine could distinguish between sentiment and principle as men of his class do not often try to do. He honestly believed that there ought to be no such thing as property in land, and that neither Redmond Vaughan nor any one else had any moral right to keep men out of those fields and woods, or to prevent the Company's pipes from being laid through them. As for the farmers who were to be called out to resist the invasion, he hated them as a class even more thoroughly than the class above them. The labouring men, the wielders of pick

and shovel, were his true comrades, on whose side he meant to live and die ; and could he refuse to lead them now if they needed him, simply because some stirrings of kindred blood, some yearnings of pity, had softened his heart towards this 'cousin' of his whose fancied rights clashed with theirs ?

It was the old choice between love and honour, though in his own mind he used neither word ; and Valentine felt between them as if his soul were being torn in two. It did occur to him that he might make off into the moors and hear nothing more of the affair until it was over, and so be spared the necessity of taking either side ; but on the whole that cautious counsel was too repugnant to his whole disposition to have any chance of being followed. On the contrary, he resolved to stay down upon the works instead of going up home when his work for the day was ended, that he might know from the first what the men would resolve upon doing ; and though his principles would not let him advise them to do nothing, he had some hope that his influence might avail to soften the temper in which they should set to work.

Wandering about, with his little grey dog at his heels, Valentine noticed an unwonted stir among the men, a kind of subdued bustle, and a coming and going of small boys with messages ; and presently he found that by twos and threes they were making their way towards the little red-brick building that served as office and pay-shed ; and there he too turned his steps.

Tom Waterlow was there, haranguing the small assembly, with more fluency than might have been expected of him, with a vigour and a command of language indeed that perhaps was not altogether natural. Dutch courage he did not need, having plenty of his own—of a bull-dog, unreasoning sort ; but Dutch eloquence he may have been endeavouring to acquire, having no confidence in his own gifts in that kind.

'We've the law on our side,' he was saying as Valentine came up, 'though I for one should not care a curse if we hadn't. We had our orders, and we laid those mains according to orders ; and I'll be hanged if any twopenny-halfpenny country squire shall take them up again to please himself ! As for all of you, I don't doubt that you'll be willing to join me. You've sense enough to judge for yourselves how your trade will prosper if every landowner that takes a fancy against it is to put a stop to it whenever he pleases. Besides, there'll be some

first-rate sport, if only they've the pluck to stand up to us at all !' There was a murmur of agreement, and then a huge ill-looking fellow, whom Valentine knew as the greatest bully on the works, slouched forward and asked a question which he did not catch. Tom Waterlow nodded. 'Mr. Vaughan,' he said, raising his voice, 'has done me the honour to let me know what he means to do and when it is to be done. So I suppose they mean fighting.'

By this time Valentine had pushed his way to the speaker's side.

'For God's sake, sir,' he said in an undertone, 'make it clear that it is to be fighting with fists and nothing else. There's some here that think nothing of coming out with a knife, like sneaking foreigners, when they get in a passion, instead of hitting out like Englishmen. Tell them you'll take no man with you unless knives and picks and all such are left behind.'

Perhaps in his urgency the young man's tone was not sufficiently deferential for the ears of the master's son. Tom Waterlow eyed him sulkily.

'It's their own look out !' he said. 'It's not my business to take care of Vaughan's men.'

Instantly Valentine turned where he stood, and addressed his comrades.

'Lads !' he cried, 'we want a fight, but we don't want bloodshed. You know well enough that when men's blood gets up things are easy done that they're sorry for afterwards. Let's pass a resolution that no man's to take aught but his own two fists to fight with ; and then if mischief comes of this night's work it'll not lie at *our* door.'

There was a dissatisfied grumbling murmur, and a voice said, 'Ay ! but what's t'other side going to take ?' and another—'Mr. Waterlow's captain. What's he say ?'

They looked at Tom Waterlow, but from his inexpressive countenance it was hard to gather anything beyond what the fact of his declining to speak conveyed.

Valentine ran his eyes over the little crowd, and saw that it was composed of the most turbulent spirits on the works, and that his own special friends and followers were not among them. Most of them lodged at a distance, as he did himself, and had apparently gone to their homes without having heard of what was on foot ; or they were holding back out of dislike to some of those who were foremost on the occasion.

He despaired of influencing this lot in any way, but the last speech had decided him as to his own course.

'Look here, lads!' he said in clear, ringing tones. 'I said once that I was with you to do my part if ever any one, gentry or farmers about here, tried to interfere with the rights of the working men. I'd have been willing to join with you to-night, and to bring some to help that won't stir hand or foot without me. But if you're going to take a *gentleman* for your leader, and to trust men with murdering weapons that are scarce to be trusted with their own two hands—why, I'm out of it!'

'We don't want your help!' cried the hulking giant who had first spoken to Tom Waterlow. 'You're just one of that d——d lot yourself!'

The taunt was meant perhaps to drive the man at whom it was flung into trying to prove it untrue. But Valentine Elliot's determination hardened suddenly in the face of it, as the will of every Vaughan had stiffened itself against opposition for the last two hundred years.

'I suppose I am!' he said quietly, half to himself, 'and blood is thicker than water after all.' And with that he thrust his hands into his pockets, and slid out of the group, as though its deliberations had ceased to have any interest for him.

But the moment he was out of their sight he quickened his pace, hurried to the only one of the huts where he was likely to be able to borrow pen, ink, and paper, and hastily wrote and sent off his note to Arthur Kenyon.

Then, being aware in a half-abstracted sort of way that he was hungry, Valentine further came upon his friend for some supper, and having been made heartily welcome to it, in navvy fashion, sat down to eat and drink, and to give an occasional morsel to Snip in the intervals of deep meditation.

His admiration for Arthur had led him to think that perhaps this very new kind of parson might do some good if he were on the spot; but on the whole Valentine inclined to think that the fight would take place, whatever Mr. Kenyon might do or say.

And what was to be his own part in it?

He felt no obligation now to fight on the side of his mates, and no wish to do so, considering the way in which they were going to set about the business. But to take part against them seemed like treachery.

'I'll be there!' he said to himself at last, 'but I'll take what

part I choose, and no other. And my part is—to be the hand *he* has lost. It's no fault of his that he can't strike out and guard himself as other men do. No man shall touch him to-night if I can help it, but I'll strike no blow except in guarding him. There's none of the chaps would touch him if they rightly understood how things stand ; and I'll see they don't do what they'd take shame to themselves for if they knew. There are old scores that will never be cleared off between the Vaughans and me ; but I owe this one a debt that I'd like to pay to-night.'

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FIGHT.

'There's some die winning, and some die sinning,
But I wot sae winna we—my dear
I wot sae winna we !'

A. C. Swinburne.

ARTHUR knew by this time every field-path and woodland track between Ashden and Cross Rigg ; and was not in the habit either of waiting to look for path or stile or gap when he chanced to be in a hurry to get from one point to another. It did not take him long, striking straight across country, to reach that field below the reservoir embankment where he and Redmond, the night before, had stumbled over that low mound, so like an elongated grave.

In the belt of woodland that bordered it a dark figure suddenly rose up before him, and a guarded voice said 'Mr. Kenyon ?'

'Elliot ? I am in time, then ?'

'Ay ! Yonder they are, Mr. Vaughan and his lot, hard at work. I'm neither going to help nor hinder them—just now. But the others will be up directly—I thought I heard something moving down yonder just now—and then the fun will begin.'

'Well ! I suppose I must go and preach peace, and tell Vaughan that he is going to make a fool of himself !' said Arthur regretfully. 'Just give us warning if the enemy seem likely to take us at a disadvantage.'

He sprang lightly over the drystone wall, and ran down the

field to where in the dimness could be discerned a group of bending figures, silently busy.

They were uncovering the pipes, and the soft soil was easily removed, so that a few minutes had sufficed to lay a good many of them bare. Under Redmond's direction some of them were already being lifted from the trench and laid in a heap beside those in the corner of the field that had not yet been put down.

It took Arthur only a minute to pick out Redmond's tall figure from among the rest ; and it was to him that he spoke first, in an undertone ; though he knew that if the leader would not hear him it would be his unpleasant and probably useless task to appeal to his followers.

'Vaughan,' he said, 'have you considered what you are doing ? If you think that the Company has exceeded its rights, surely this is not the best way——'

He knew by the way in which Redmond half turned to hear him, with a squaring of the shoulders and a lift of the chin, that his remonstrance was useless. And he was fated not even to finish it, for at that instant Valentine Elliot came running swiftly towards them.

'Here they are,' he said quietly, and as he spoke half a dozen dark forms crashed through the hedge nearest to which they stood, and were quickly followed by three times as many more.

Their leader stood still for a moment when he had arrived on the field of action, and the rest paused as if to see what he meant to do. Perhaps he had some vague idea that some kind of challenge and reply ought to pass before any blow was struck, but neither his tongue nor his wits, such as they were, could be said to be fully at his command.

Redmond Vaughan moved forward to confront him, and *his* voice rang out with no uncertain sound.

'Mr. Waterlow, I warn you and the men with you that you are trespassing on my land.'

'Trespassing be d——d !' said Tom Waterlow thickly. 'You're meddling with our work and we're going to stop it. Move off there ! or it'll be the worse for you.'

'Go on, lads !' said Redmond coolly, 'but don't break any of the pipes, mind ! Now I come to think of it, they shall have their property back in good condition. Will you take them back with you, Mr. Waterlow ? or shall we roll them after you ?'

Some of the younger fellows, who had stood up to face the

rush that they expected, now bent to their work again with a grim chuckle, and heaved up two or three of the great tubes of iron out of their resting-place.

'Come on, then !' shouted one of them. 'Come and take what belongs you !' and his taunting tone was answered by a hoarse roar of indignation from the navvies, as they pressed forward, eagerly accepting the challenge.

The forces on either side were nearly equal, with perhaps a slight preponderance on the side of the workmen, but no one had time or inclination for counting heads.

What followed was very like a football scrimmage, *plus* a good many sticks and clubs, the blows of which fell with rather uncertain aim in the darkness. Probably the rank and file were not much hotter or more in earnest than they would have been over a football, as they tugged and pulled and kicked and wrestled for the possession of those cumbrous lengths of piping, and certainly most of them were enjoying themselves immensely.

Arthur was in the thick of the fight, supposing himself to be most suitably and pacifically employed in trying to come across Tom Waterlow, with a view to knocking him down and if necessary sitting upon him.

'He is at the bottom of this,' said Arthur to himself. 'If I could get rid of him I might manage the men—they're not angry, yet.'

Redmond was defending three of his followers, whose arms were encumbered with their burden, striking out freely with his father's heavy hunting-crop, and half mad with the 'delight of battle,' untasted before. If he had known more about the business he might have wondered even then how it was that so few blows reached him. Others knew the reason, as they made out that tall form beside him, the very duplicate of his own, keeping on the defensive, silent where all were shouting like schoolboys, and parrying a double share of hard knocks with watchful dexterity.

Before any one had met with any serious damage, and before Arthur had been able to collar the man he was seeking, the contending forces swayed apart, and hostilities ceased for a moment, everybody being a little out of breath, and not having as yet worked up sufficient rage to supply its place.

Redmond's men still had possession of the pipes that they had taken up, and so far were triumphant ; but on the other hand, their opponents by sheer weight and force of numbers had

driven them back from the trench at which they had been working, and Tom Waterlow and others now proudly bestrode it.

Arthur flung himself between the two parties, pushing the men back on either side impartially.

'Men ! listen !' he cried. 'You've had your fun, now listen a moment while I talk sense to you ! What good do you think you are going to do this way ? Do you mean to fight over these pipes every night and every yard betwixt here and Castleford ? If Mr. Vaughan thinks that he's being wronged, you that are Englishmen wouldn't wish him to sit quiet and put up with it ! But his quarrel is with the Company, not with you. Let the Company prove their right to come here, to Mr. Vaughan's satisfaction ; and meantime do all of you shake hands like honest men and bear no malice.'

Whatever Arthur may have felt, his clear, ringing tones told of nothing but a certainty of being obeyed, and though no one answered, and it was too dark to see faces, some magnetic instinct told him that his words had somewhat of the desired effect. He was about to follow them up with a little chaff, that might have changed the whole affair from possible tragedy into farcical comedy, when Tom Waterlow's voice cried out—

'Don't listen to him, lads ! He's a cheat ! He was sacked from college for cheating. He's in league with that cursed lot to stop the work and take the bread out of your mouths.'

'That's a lie !' thundered Valentine Elliot, and sprang forward, forgetting his resolve to act only on the defensive, and the rest of Redmond's men followed close, eager to regain the ground they had lost. They were met by the navvies, more than willing to have another bout of fisticuffs in place of talking ; and there was another lighthearted tussle over two lengths of piping that had been lying unobserved on the ground between them, and over which Valentine almost tripped in his haste.

For a moment Arthur stood out of it, clenching his hands together. He would not have answered that brutal speech, even if the tone of voice had not told him that the speaker was far from sober ; but he had to master himself, lest he should go and take the young man by the throat and shake the life out of him.

The next instant he was recalled to what was going on about him by a sudden recoil of two or three of those nearest, and

looking round he saw that Tom Waterlow had snatched something out of his pocket and levelled it at the heads of the little crowd in front of him.

'Stand back !' he was saying. 'I swear I'll shoot the first man that steps over this trench.'

Those immediately opposite to him showed no great desire to advance. The word 'shoot' struck a new note in the half-boyish rough-and-tumble squabble, and the thick, blunt stem of the revolver looked threatening even through the dim light. But there were others further down the line who had not heard or had not heeded him, and as the young man swung round towards them Arthur realised that he was in no state to be trusted with any such weapon.

A quick movement on Arthur's part brought them face to face.

'Waterlow ! I could not have believed even you to be such a fool as to be swaggering about with firearms at such a time as this ! Put down that preposterous tool and let us have no more of this folly.'

The recent undergraduate in the young man vibrated in response to the well-known voice of the incensed college Don. He wavered, lowered the revolver, and held it for a moment irresolutely, as if half in the mind to put it up, or at least to allow it to be taken from him.

Only for an instant. In far less time than it takes to tell it his mood had changed ; swayed from something like shame to half-drunken fury by a loud, coarse laugh that broke out just at his elbow. The big, brutal workman who had been first to second the proposal of a fight was close at his leader's side ; and though his laugh and the jeer that went with it were not the outcome of a deep-laid scheme, they answered the purpose as well as if they had been.

'Keep off, or I'll do for you the first !' cried Tom Waterlow, and raised his weapon again, with his finger on the trigger. Arthur struck it up with his stick and closed with him, determined to get possession of the revolver at all hazards, seeing that no man's life was safe as long as it was in such hands.

There were perhaps twenty single combats going on all over the field, and this passed unnoticed amongst the rest. When Arthur Kenyon was in practice, as he had been ten years earlier, Tom Waterlow could not have stood up to him for three minutes ; but now he was somewhat out of training, and in coming to close grips he had forfeited the advantage which

his superior lightness and quickness would have given him. Twice he all but mastered the other's right hand, and twice it broke away again ; and then with a violent effort the younger man freed himself altogether and sprang a pace backward. His finger pressed the trigger—how much of wilful intention went to that pressure Waterlow himself never knew—and the sharp crack of the revolver rang out above the confused noises of the fray.

A sharp sting, like a red-hot needle darting through his chest, told Arthur where the bullet had gone. In a flash of inspiration he knew that he could master his foe *now*, before he himself had had time to feel his wound, and before the other had recovered from the surprise of having fired. Springing forward, he caught the weapon from the young man's hand, and with the butt of it struck him on the head with all the force he could muster.

Tom Waterlow went staggering backward, stepped into the trench behind him, and fell all his length—and so lay. Arthur looked vaguely after him, with a half-formed intention of going to see how much he was hurt, but the dusky field swam and reeled so before his eyes that he concluded that the wisest thing that he could do was to take himself out of the way of the combatants while he was able.

He dragged himself a few paces away, with feet that stumbled at every tussock of grass, and just reached a heap of sods, where he sat down, leaning his head upon his hands, and thinking that as soon as he had pulled himself together a little and could speak he must make another attempt to interfere with the fight.

It had stopped itself before he had time to realise how things were going.

The unfamiliar, unmistakable sound of the pistol-shot had startled the navvies with that thrill of terror that in brave men turns to rage.

'Yah ! guns !' shouted a voice. 'Mates, they've set the keepers on us, to shoot us down like hares ! Give it them !'

Several long clasp-knives flashed out with a swiftness that seemed to show that the men had all along meant to use them if the matter went against them. A new element of real anger, real bloodthirst, suddenly turned the fight from half play to more than earnest. Men swore under their breath, and left off shouting ; and Redmond's side, as they met steel blade

with ash-stick, gave way a little, instinctively feeling that the battle was unequal if once the enemy came within arm's length.

Redmond did not give back, and the recoil of his men left him almost alone, a pace or so in front of the others, with one foot upon a length of piping, the *casus belli* that perhaps every one else had by this time forgotten.

There was one man who all the evening had been waiting for some such opportunity as this. He sprang forward, a stout cudgel in one hand and a knife in the other, which last he had said to himself that he would not use unless 'the swell' had pistols about him.

'Come on!' he shouted. 'You can get a chap a two-month in prison—can you fight him like a man?'

He struck out, but the blow was parried by a stick in the hand of another figure, so like that of the young Squire and so close to it that he wavered for an instant, half bewildered.

'Two of you! Can't you even fight fair?' he snarled, with a savage oath. 'Take that, then! I'll pay my debts, though I swing for it!'

Quick as thought he changed the knife into his right hand and lunged forward. He hardly knew or cared which of the two the blow was aimed at; to his confused, blind wrath it seemed that in striking either he was striking at the man who had wronged him.

And one of them took the knife in his side up to the hilt, and throwing up his arms fell at their feet, with a strange, half-uttered cry.

CHAPTER XVII.

'This much I know—'

'When life gropes
Feebly for the path where fell
Light last on the evening slopes.'

R. Browning.

THAT cry stopped the fight, as suddenly and utterly as if it had been the trump of doom. All knew in an instant what had happened, for there had been a pause in the *mêlée*, and for the first time since it began every man's attention had been bent

on the same point, with the old-world instinct of letting the two champions fight out the cause between them.

All knew that something had come to pass that no one had meant—like Kipling's Irishman—

‘And so we all was murderers, that started out in fun.’

Redmond Vaughan was kneeling beside that prostrate figure that lay so still, and never raised his head to see whether friends or opponents were thronging round him.

‘A light ! For God's sake bring a light !’ he said. ‘Allen, where did you put the lanterns ?’

It was Allen who brought the bullseye lantern, but it was one of the navvies who produced a box of matches and lighted while he held it. A ring of pale, agitated faces showed for a moment in the flash of light before it was turned towards the ground.

Valentine Elliot lay there, with one arm flung above his head, just as he had fallen, with the flush of battle still upon his face, and on his lips a smile so triumphant that for the moment it was hard to believe that he was seriously hurt.

But the knife was in his side, and Redmond laid his hand on the heart, with his own pulses throbbing so wildly that he could not feel whether any throb answered them.

The man who had struck the blow fell on his knees beside them, and almost pushed the young Squire's hand away, laying his own in its place.

‘He's alive !’ he said. ‘What's this of it ? Is he your brother ?’

‘No—yes !’ answered Redmond. ‘Allen, go for the doctor. Get down to the Hall and take a horse there, and ride for your life. Does no one know what we ought to do for him at once ?—whether one dare draw out the knife ?’

No one answered. Among the tenantry there was no man who felt competent to meddle, and the navvies—more used to desperate emergencies—had drawn into the background, sullen and ashamed.

‘Surely Kenyon was here just now,’ said Redmond half to himself ; ‘where can he have gone ?—Kenyon !’

A hand rested somewhat heavily upon his shoulder, and Arthur Kenyon's face, deady white, stooped into the circle of light.

'I saw it all—I could not get to you any sooner,' he whispered, sinking down till he half sat, half lay, upon the grass beside Valentine. 'No—don't draw it out till you have something ready to check the bleeding—handkerchiefs—scarfs—that's right. Fold some of them into a pad. Put this round him, Vaughan—so! Now! be ready to slip this under and draw it close when I give the word.'

Arthur's hand was fairly steady as he drew out the knife, though he had first to draw it twice across his eyes to clear them from the mist that seemed to come and go before them every moment.

The great rush of blood that he had half dreaded, half hoped to see did not follow, only a few reluctant drops; at the sight of which his heart sank.

He knew, or feared that he knew, what that meant; but he said nothing, only—more by gesture than by words—directed the others as they adjusted the bandages. It was the man who had inflicted the wound who supplemented Redmond's one hand in the task; and no one thought it strange.

'Do you think we should try to move him?' asked Redmond after a moment.

'I don't know. Better wait until he comes to himself, and we can see if he is in much pain. Fetch some water, somebody!'

Two young men dashed off to the brook, and were back again in a moment or two with hats half full and dripping with water. While they were gone Redmond looked for the first time at Arthur.

'Kenyon—you are hurt too!'

'Yes! never mind—that can wait.'

His voice wavered and sank till it was barely audible, and he put his handkerchief to his lips. The man who was kneeling beside him turned and looked carefully at him, and with his great rough hands—hands stained with the blood of the man he had stabbed—lifted him gently and supported him with knee and shoulder. Then the water came, and some one else loosened Valentine's collar and poured some on his face, and they thought that his eyelids quivered and his lips parted with a longer, fuller breath.

It was a strange group that the lantern's gleam illumined; with those four sharply contrasted figures fully revealed, and a background of dim forms and shifting, pallid faces. The

strangeness of it under the circumstances struck one of the navvies very forcibly, and he came forward, laying his hand on the shoulder of his kneeling comrade.

‘Jack !’ he muttered, ‘if the young fellow’s gone or going, you’d best be making yourself scarce. There’s too many seen you—us chaps couldn’t get you off, if we was to swear all we knew.’

The man answered the well-meant suggestion by a deep muttered oath, and did not stir ; and his friend drew back into the shadows.

Arthur Kenyon took the handkerchief from his lips for a moment, and there was blood on it.

‘Waterlow is lying yonder,’ he said, in a half whisper. ‘Somebody had better go and look to him.’

‘Was it he who fired ? Did he fire at you ?’ asked Redmond, looking up.

The navvy readjusted the supporting arm that he had thrown round Arthur, and pressed his shoulder warningly.

‘I believe Mr. Kenyon’s touched in the lungs,’ he said, ‘and if so it’s as much as his life’s worth to go talking !’

‘It does not matter,’ said Arthur quite simply, and then the apparent inconsequence of the words struck him and made him smile, even with that tragedy so close beside him. Truly, it did matter, both to himself and to Valentine Elliot, if shot and knife had cut the knot that they could never have untied ; but not as things matter to men who love life and look to see good days.

And as he smiled Valentine’s dark eyes opened wide and fixed themselves upon his face.

‘It’s all right, then ?’ he said slowly. ‘The fight’s over—and no one hurt ? Where’s Mr. Vaughan ?’

‘Here,’ said Redmond’s voice on the other side. ‘Here, thanks to you. But I am afraid—you have paid too dearly——’

‘Oh, me !’ said Valentine, and the tone was strangely like that in which Arthur had just said that it did not matter. For the moment he said nothing more, and his eyes went slowly from one face to another, as if reading there what had happened. It seemed as though he attempted to lift himself up—the very slightest movement, checked on the instant by some inward warning.

‘Are you in much pain ?’ asked Redmond gently. ‘Do you think you could bear to be moved—as far as Whiteman’s ?’

'I'd sooner stay where I am,' he answered slowly, with an odd half-apologetic look. 'I think I sha'n't keep you long. But I've a fancy to face it with all my wits about me, and I doubt they'll go if you try to shift me.'

'Face what?'

'I don't know—but I think Mr. Kenyon knows. Mr. Kenyon, do you remember that night with poor Charlie down at the huts? I thought then that when my time came I should like you to be there, but I didn't think it would be so soon——'

'It should not have been—would not have been, but for my folly—God forgive me!'

Redmond's voice had the break and jar of deep passion and pain in it, and Valentine looked a little surprised.

'I didn't mean that there was much to be sorry for,' he said, as if half to himself. 'There's no one to care when I go, not even——. It's something, I suppose, for my father's son to get out of the world without having done much harm to anybody. A chap would like to know what he was going to, though. Mr. Kenyon?'

'Yes, my dear fellow. I am here,' whispered Arthur, freeing himself with an imperative sign from his supporter's arms, and bending down till he rested upon his elbow on the grass beside the other.

'Would you mind saying it again—what you said that night? I doubt I've forgotten, though I did not think I should ever forget.'

Arthur had not forgotten; would never forget that one night when he had *felt* as well as known the power of his office, when a Power not his own had seemed to speak through him, when to be used for such high ends had seemed for the time worth all the agony of renunciation that had brought him there.

But *now*, what had he to say? Wide as the gulf betwixt heaven and hell was the gulf betwixt that night at the dying navvy's bedside and this afternoon in the haunted chamber at Cross Rigg! How dare he speak, who was only not an apostate in outward act because he had had no opportunity to sign, seal, and deliver to the Tempter the fee-simple of his soul?

A quick shudder ran through him, and the hand that he had laid over Valentine's tightened its grasp, but he did not speak. Redmond bent over them both.

'Kenyon! you cannot speak to him—you must not try it! You are choking with blood already. My God, what are we to do?'

'Hush!—that's of no consequence,' gasped Arthur, half petulantly. 'Find me another handkerchief—somebody!' and to himself he added, with unutterable longing, 'It is my post—but to die at it is better luck than I deserve!'

The whole world seemed to have narrowed down to this small circle of light in which he and Valentine lay; all its claims and its chances to this—the soul that through those beautiful, lustrous dying eyes looked into his soul, asking for what he had not to give.

'I thought I knew—I seemed to see—then,' he whispered at last, with a pang of ineffable bitterness. 'But it is—it is all gone now! My word is—worth nothing. I wish you had—some one else—to speak——'

'I never cared for any one else's speaking,' said Valentine dreamily. 'My grandfather—to hear him talk you would think he knew all about it—but if God is as *he* says, it's a poor look out for such as me. . . . It was all nought to me till lately . . . The Almighty was hard on me—I was wronged before ever I was born—I thought I did well enough if I wronged nobody. But I hadn't many to care for, and nobody cared for me, except poor Snip. And that reminds me—he's up yonder in the wood, minding my coat. I'll give him to you, Mr. Vaughan, if you'll accept of him. He'll take to you, I know, and you'll be good to him, for the sake of old times.'

'I'll take him,' said Redmond, steadying his voice with an effort. 'He shall have a happy life with me if he will. I too may be thankful if a dog will love me. And—look here!—I have no right to preach to you, God knows, except that as long as I can remember I have had a burden to bear as well——'

He paused as though feeling for words, and Valentine looked up at him and smiled. For them too perhaps that circle of light bounded existence, and indeed the vaguely shifting forms and sadly curious faces beyond it were silent and dim as ghosts.

'I know!' said Valentine. 'It was that, more than all you did for me, that made me—not hate you—in spite of all that's come and gone.'

'That's it! So good comes out of evil. And so it makes us

think that somewhere, somehow, everything may come right at last——'

The words were boyish in their simplicity, and boyish too the sob that had to be choked back to make way for them.

'You've a right to think so, for you've done your part towards it. So has Mr. Kenyon, down yonder on the embankment. But I——'

'God knows,' said Arthur, and the broken whisper was full of passionate sadness—'God knows how much of it was done for Him, and how much just because one must be doing. Mr. Vaughan is a better guide to trust than I.'

'Nay! if *you* don't know—I——' said Valentine, with a sigh. 'Well, I suppose poor Charlie knows by this time, and I shall know before long. If I might, I'd come back and tell you—ay! and see how things go with *her*. God bless her for evermore, though she doesn't care for me.'

As in a dream Arthur saw the face of the girl they both loved, and cold and dim beside that beautiful vision showed the pathos of the three ruined lives gathered there with the darkness of the summer night all round them. It was with an almost impersonal pity and regret that he counted his own in with the others, one more wreck that seemed to have been inevitable.

And then—call it what you will: the natural reaction of mind formed for hope and not for despair, echoes of old lessons of childish days, or a hint, an inspiration from some region higher than earth's pains and penalties—as once before, he snatched a joyous certainty out of the very depths of despair.

The leap of his pulses, the revulsion of feeling, turned him giddy, and took the little strength that he had left. He tried to speak and failed; then, with a great effort, found words and force to utter them.

The wistful eyes that watched his face were growing dim—or was it his own that were failing? Was it his own hand or Valentine's that was growing so cold, as they held each other with the clasp of two who sink together in deep waters?

'Valentine, can you hear me?' said Arthur, bending down. 'The truth is truth, though I am not worthy to speak it. *This much I know*—it is our Father to whom we go, and our Elder Brother who shall judge us all——'

His voice failed suddenly—his head fell forward—and the

big navvy who had before cautioned him not to talk caught hold of him with clumsy dexterity and laid him on the grass beside Valentine Elliot, taking care not to loosen their clasped hands. 'Seems as if they might go together !' he said in a husky whisper ; and no one contradicted him.

(To be continued.)

FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW.

Scene : the dining-room of one of her Majestys' **In a Modern Prisons.** The women—for it was a women's gaol—file in, each carrying their own little well-scrubbed stool, and seat themselves in rows. The female warders, in proportion of about one to four of the prisoners, stand or sit about among them, as keenly interested as their charges. For they are gathered to listen to one of a course of Home Nursing lectures which the prison authorities have permitted Miss Honor Morten to give as an experiment. As far as I can hear, every one seems to agree that it is an experiment which will bear repeating indefinitely. The audience are women wearing the red star, which marks the first offender, and they are consequently more amenable to influences. One who was present at one of the lectures has written a description of the scene which interested me. She says :—

'The proceedings began by a string of questions on the part of Miss Morten upon the subject of preceding addresses. The lecture itself immediately followed, though the questions even here did not entirely cease. Answers were marked by genuine intelligence and grasping of the subject. Thus, for instance, the woman who replied to an inquiry relating to the disadvantages of brandy when used internally as a cure for a gaping and bleeding wound by the assertion that alcohol "makes the heart go faster," evinced a real insight into cause and effect that spoke well for both teacher and taught. Finally, manual dexterity was promoted by the spreading of linseed and mustard poultices, the application of head, thumb, and ankle bandages ; in short, by the reduction of theory to practice. "You like the lectures?" I asked one of the scholars, a young woman who had followed every word and movement with avidity. "Oh, yes," she said brightly. And, indeed, there was sufficient evidence in the countenances around, not only of a passing pleasure in the change thus brought into the

monotony of prison life, but also, surely, of the softening and humanising result of even a small amount of education and of training.'

Is it not blessedly significant of that spirit of the age which dictates that one being in prison, we should come unto her? Is it not a higher Spirit than the spirit of the age which, after all, is the prompter of such things as these, not only of the lecturers, but the authorities who give sanction?

* * * * *

Purchases. What odd things one can buy if one has the inclination and the money! 'Vanity Fair,' the 'Celestial City,' 'Castle Joyous,' and 'The Broad and Narrow Way' have come under the auctioneer's hammer within the last month or so. They were, perhaps I had better explain, part of the scenery used in the production of the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' Death's grey cloth cloak, tunic, and jersey, and two of Apollyon's costumes also figured in the catalogue. Fancy bidding for a set of angel's feather wings! It is almost, but not quite, as sacrilegious as buying Snowdon or the mummy of the great Pharaoh.

But one instinct we moderns have largely lost, the instinct of reverence. We are generous, charitable, and honest—up to a point—but we are not reverent. We are willing to dissect body, soul, and spirit, and examine them critically under electric light. But we do not fear. The mysteries have no charm for the modern world, except the mysteries exposed in glaring headlines of an Americanised newspaper. Have we lost some subtle fineness as we have gained in knowledge?

* * * * *

Child Slaves still. An eight hours' working day for themselves, sixteen for their children, and twenty for their wives—this, it seems to a mere onlooker from above the working world, is what the British working men (so-called) demand. Some figures produced at the request of the London School Board have set me thinking these things. From figures sent in by the teachers, I find that in addition to the school hours and work there are in the 112 schools reporting, 1,143 children who work from 19 to 29 hours per week, 729 from 30 to 39 hours, and 285 from 40 hours and above. Of the total, 309 are employed at housework and domestic work for 8,309 hours per week, and receive a total sum of £21 19s. 3½d., which is

an average of 27 hours for each child at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour; 719 are employed at newspaper and milk delivery for 21,662 hours, and receive a total sum of £94 1s. 10d., an average of 30 hours each child at 1d. per hour; 1,056 children are employed at shop and factory work and errands for 31,923 hours, and receive a total sum of £121 4s. 3d., an average of 30 hours each child at 1d. per hour; and 69 are employed at various other employments for 2,001 hours per week, and receive a total sum of £9 12s. 6d., an average of 29 hours each child at $1\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour. In some cases meals are allowed to the children in addition to the payment. From one school the return gave the following: As newspaper seller, $50\frac{1}{2}$ hours a week; as errand boy, 59 hours; as newspaper seller, 63 hours; as errand boy, $68\frac{1}{2}$ hours; as milk boy, 53 hours; and another, $57\frac{1}{2}$ hours. A boy in another school, who works for an undertaker $23\frac{1}{2}$ hours a week, 'helps in measuring corpses,' and receives 1s. a week for his gruesome labours. The teachers state that when some of the boys who are at work out of school hours come to school in the morning they have enough to do to keep them awake.

We are overdrawing the future to pay the debts of the present indeed. But the day of settlement will come.

* * * * *

What's in a Name? How much there is in a title! Many books have been made by their titles, and many a good book never came to the public eye because it had a title that did not catch the attention. Indeed, some authors have such a genius for titles—I should like, but must refrain from giving their names in bald print—that I am sure they might make second fortunes by giving titles to other men's books, and of course sharing the profits. But all this—gratuitous offer of a fortune included—is only by the way to saying that societies are blessed or cursed in the same way by their titles.

It always struck me that there must have been genius in the inventor of the 'Guild of Poor Things.' The 'Children's League of Pity' is another happy hit, and in connection with Miss Agnes Weston's work for sailors there is the peculiarly suitable 'Children's Naval Brigade.' But what set me thinking these things was the annual meeting of the order of 'the Daughters of the King.' Of course it is Ruskin's in the first place, or perhaps I should say in the second place, for its origin

is far back in the days of 'purple and fine linen' and virtuous women who rose in the dark to make scarlet petticoats. But its application to a body of women banded together for the doing of all kinds of service to their King and their fellows seems a peculiarly happy thought on somebody's part. This order I see, too, has outrun the power of the one honorary organising secretary to cope with, so that a paid secretary is to be appointed. I am sure a great deal of its success is due to its name.

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' competitions, see p. 480.)

FIRST SHELF.

VARIETY SUBJECT.

Discuss 'Aylwin.'

Several very well written papers on this subject have been sent in. Almost all join in the chorus of praise that sprang at first from the critics to their fellow-critic. *Nora's* gives both sides with great spirit, and we select that for the prize, though Chelsea China takes exception to her statement that 'character-drawing' has been developed during the last twenty years. How about Mrs. Gaskell, George Eliot, or Thackeray? Most of the papers are too long for the China Cupboard; this is notably the case with *Doronicum's*, which is very interesting. *Tantallon's* conversation is amusing; *Tartar's* and *Sea Maiden's* very good.

'AYLWIN.'

'Take luminous foreheads and garnish with rue,
And plenty of Romany, borrowed or new;
Add sunsets, and fate, and Pre-Raphaelite chutney,
And stand twenty years in an oven at Putney.'

Arthur Pendenys.

Very few recently published novels have called forth such an outburst of criticism as 'Aylwin'—criticism, for the most part extraordinarily and unanimously favourable (only one reviewer having been bold enough to suggest that the world would have sustained no very serious loss if Mr. Watts Dunton had persisted in his determination not to publish), until the spirit of contrariness at last provoked a counter-blast of irritated common-sense from a 'Country Cousin.'

Yet, in spite of all this prompt and eloquent appreciation, the fact remains that Mr. Watts Dunton's romance—for as romance it must certainly be described—is a difficult book to criticise, partly because it defies, or rather ignores, all rules and conventional standards, and because it possesses, at the same time, a touch of that greatness which can afford to defy and ignore.

It is a bewildering book, for its several flavours of Bulwer Lytton, Borrow, Rider Haggard, George Macdonald, and Hall Caine, blend as oddly as vanilla and garlic.

The earlier chapters recall the style of the 'Caxtons' and 'Pelham,' but the reader feels that the time is past for this autobiographical study of a 'youth' (Harry Aylwin, from the beginning to the end of his career, can never be otherwise described) with such an extraordinary up-bringing.

with such entire independence, and such a lamentable want of common-sense.

The haughty mother, the reprobate Tom Wynne, the impossibly lovely lay figure of a heroine, all belong to the novel of fifty years ago. A novelist of the modern school would have succeeded in giving them more individuality. Even the Welsh element—though the descriptions of scenery have a certain lofty, if conventional, beauty—is unconvincing. Winnie Wynne, 'Cymric child' though she is—steeped in Welsh romance and folklore—yet fails to bring before one the *Welshness* of the Welsh, as faulty, tiresome Glory Quayle does in the case of the little Manx nation.

As to the accuracy of the description of Romany life and character, there are, probably, very few persons competent to judge, and it may be the fault of the reader, rather than of the writer, if the gipsies appear a little unsatisfactory and unreal.

But the London slum is familiar ground nowadays, whatever it may have been twenty years ago, and no one who knows slum-dwellers will deny that Mrs. Gudgeon is hopelessly stagey, and that the whole episode of Winnie's life in London is improbable in the highest degree.

We complain of many of the characteristics and tendencies of the modern novel, but there is no denying that it has taught us to look for that fidelity in detail which has come to be known as Realism, and a skill in character-drawing which produces effects which are as clever as they are often painful and repulsive. After a course of such literature the reader very likely turns with relief to the true romance—to the atmosphere of *Zenda*, and the fortunate Isles where *Anything* may happen; but this is by no means the same thing as the unreal and improbable in a modern novel; and when he is given a story of to-day—a tale of modern country society and London life—he naturally expects to find the attention to possibilities (not to say probabilities), the character-drawing, and the mastery of technique, which are among the gains of the last twenty years.

In spite of the *éclat* attained by keeping the reading public waiting for his book, it may be questioned whether Mr. Watts Dunton would not, on the whole, have scored a greater success with 'Aylwin' if he had published it when it was first written.

There are many questions which the reader, when he lays down 'Aylwin,' would fain ask of the author.

Can he explain, for instance, why a cultivated and refined gipsy girl such as his Sinfi—a girl who had associated with artists and other educated people, and who must, moreover, have learnt English as a foreign language—should have talked the horrible lingo which she is represented as speaking?

Can he tell us why Percy Aylwin, who was so devoted to Rhona Boswell as to have turned Romany for her sake, should never have been seen with her, and never have come into contact with a kinsman with whom he would presumably have had considerable sympathy?

Again: Why is Cyril Aylwin described at such length when he has so little to do with the story? To what purpose the introduction of Lord Sleaford and the insistence upon the cupidity and cunning of Vidy Lovel, neither of which ever leads to anything?

And, finally: Why in the name of common-sense, when the corpse of Tom Wynne slides down the cliff and appears in that exceedingly inconvenient and melodramatic fashion, why had not Aylwin sufficient discretion to tell the girl to close her eyes because there was something which he did not want her to see, and so lead her safely past the 'blasting spectacle,' instead of deciding to drown her and himself as a means of escape from 'a tragedy far, far worse than death'?

It is to be doubted whether a convincing reply to any of these questions would be forthcoming, and yet, in spite of all this, there hangs about the book a freshness, a lofty purity, a strain of spiritual romance which lift

it above the ordinary novel. One may be far from agreeing with the simple-minded critics who consider that its publication is an epoch in literature—that the madness of Winnie Wynne is comparable to that of Ophelia, and that Sinfi Lovel is one of the greatest heroines of fiction. One may even admit that much of the book consists of conventional platitudes, and much more is melodramatic and absurd, and at the same time feel that it is a novel which, once read, is not easily forgotten or confused with any other.

There is something fascinating in the mysticism which surrounds Philip Aylwin and the Moonlight Cross. There is much to interest in the portraits of the painters—in Wilderspin's devotion to his dead mother, and in D'Arcy's attractive personality, though he strikes the ignorant reader as being too much the genial, practical man of the world to be a faithful presentment of Dante Rossetti.

In brief, 'Aylwin' is not without charm, and this is, perhaps, the secret of its popularity, for with books as with individuals, it is not freedom from faults but the presence of this undefinable, inexplicable, unaccountable quality which attracts and enthralls.—NORA.

PRIZE WINNER FOR FEBRUARY.

Miss A. C. Shipton, Grove Rectory, Retford.

SUBJECT FOR APRIL.

Criticise THE MONTHLY PACKET.

SECOND SHELF.

HISTORICAL STUDY FOR FEBRUARY.

Prince Henry the Navigator.

Excellent papers have been sent in on this most interesting subject. Chelsea China has had difficulty in choosing between *No. 7*, *Miranda*, and *Sea Maiden*, but on the whole has decided to give the prize to the latter. She adds *Winifred Spurling's* paper, which deals more fully with the Prince's most remarkable family. All the Princes of Avis were scions of the Plantagenets, of whom England may well be proud.

PRINCE HENRY OF PORTUGAL.

In that far land 'beyond the path of the outmost sun' where live those who 'fought and sailed and ruled and loved and made our world,' at that board whereby the Strong Men are ranged, surely place has been made, and welcome high given, to Prince Henry the Navigator. For to only a few in every age is it given to do all these things so well.

Son of João I. of Portugal, the first king to help his country to recover from the dominion of the Moors, and to take her place as a prominent country of Europe; and grandson, through his English mother Philippa, of our own John of Gaunt, the blood of brave, resolute men ran in his veins.

Early in life this brave blood showed itself. Born at Oporto on March 4, 1394, he was only twenty-one when, in 1415, he was sent with his elder brothers, Duarte and Pedro, against the important Moorish city of Ceuta, which, after hard fighting, they succeeded in taking in one day.

Bravely as all three princes bore themselves, Prince Henry in particular fought so well that King João wished to knight him in precedence of his brothers, but with true knightly modesty the Prince begged him to refrain.

His fame spread till the Pope, the Emperor, the King of Castile, and our own brave Harry V. severally offered him the command of their armies.

But the Prince, 'at his return Nao [from Ceuta] brought with him strong inclination to discover new seas and lands'; and the offers of these great rulers had no temptations for a man whose heart was set on finding a way, before him undreamed of, to the East Indies by the most southern point of Africa.

In those days, when no European had rounded Cape Nao (No), so called 'to imply that there was no sailing further,' a point on the extreme north-west of Africa, such a scheme must have seemed well-nigh impossible. But several Moors had given the Prince information concerning the coasts of Africa to the southward, and how to avoid the heavy surf round Cape Nao which 'caused it to appear dangerous'; and Prince Henry resolved to overcome all difficulties.

In 1417 he went to live at Sagres, a town at the extreme south-west of Portugal, in the province of Algarve, of which he was made governor in perpetuity, to enable him to send out his expeditions from the most convenient point.

The revenues of the Order of Christ were at his disposal, as Grand Master; and though he had to contend with the sneers of those who charged him with wasting public money on useless schemes, and the ignorance of many who thought all sailors rash enough to pass Cape Bojador would turn black, and that no land but barren desert existed beyond countries already known to them, he pursued his schemes undaunted, as befitted a son of his noble race.

It has been well said that 'the ardour, not only of his own sailors, but of surrounding nations, owed its impulse to this pertinacity of purpose in him.'

A short summary of the almost yearly expeditions of discovery or colonisation, between 1417 and 1449, of which an old History of Navigation says he was 'the great encourager, or rather undertaker,' will give the best idea of the great work he carried on in spite of ill-success and ridicule.

In 1417 he fitted out two small vessels, commanding them to coast along Africa, and, doubling Cape Nao, to discover further. 'They ran sixty leagues beyond, as far as Cape Bojador (from Bojar, the westward), where they found greater difficulty from the heavy surf than at Nao; so they returned home, fully satisfied with what they had done.'

In 1418 John Gonzalez Zarco and Tristan Vaz were sent with orders to pass Cape Bojador; but before they reached the African shore a storm carried them away towards a small island, called by them Porto Santo, or 'Holy Haven, because of their deliverance there after the storm.' On hearing of this, the Prince sent Perestrelo to stock the island (which lies a little north of Madeira) with seeds and cattle, but two rabbits sent with the rest overran the island and devoured the corn, 'so that it was found necessary to unpeople the island!'

In 1419 Gonzalez and Vaz, again sent out by the Prince, rediscovered Madeira (upon which an Englishman named Macham had been cast in 1344, but that is another, and more romantic, story), which, after its first accidental discovery, had been lost again till this time. They called it Madeira from the Spanish *madera* (wood); as they found it overgrown with trees, to which they set fire so as to clear the island. 'This fire,' it is said, burnt for seven years.'

Prince Henry spent the next few years in colonising Madeira; till in 1434 he sent Gilianez to pass Cape Bojador, beyond which he sailed thirty leagues, naming the bay he discovered Augra de Ruy Vas, Bay of Gurnets.

In 1435 he sailed twelve leagues further, and landed; but the natives fled from the strange invaders, so all that was gained were the skins of some 'sea-wolves' (what these animals may be I know not), whom they found farther inland in great numbers and killed, the skins being prized at home for their great rarity.

In 1438 King João died, and the ensuing trouble fully occupied Prince Henry for two years; but in 1440 Antony Gonzalez was sent 'to the place of the sea-wolves' for more skins, and on this voyage discovered Cape Blanco, bringing home some native prisoners.

In 1442 (in which year Henry VI. of England bestowed on the Prince the Order of the Garter) he returned to Cape Blanco, and exchanged his prisoners for Guinea slaves and gold dust from the river that he named del Oro.

The gold from Rio del Oro 'sharpening men's appetites,' Nunho Tristan sailed the next year in search of it, and discovered two more islands. In 1444 a company was formed to trade to the newly discovered parts, paying a small acknowledgment to Prince Henry (surely the first rudiments of a Chartered Company to reach Africa), and took two hundred slaves from the isles of Argirim.

On these islands, in 1445, Gonzalez de Cintra was surprised by the Moors when on another slave-trading expedition, and killed, with seven of his men; after which the place was called Augra de Cintra.

In 1446 Dinio Fernandez passed beyond the river Sanga (Senegal) and discovered Cape Verde. Nunho Tristan, having sailed sixty leagues beyond, in the next year, anchored at the mouth of the Rio Grande, and sailed up it in boats; but he and most of his men were killed by the 'blacks' with poisoned darts. In the same year Alvaro Fernandez went forty leagues beyond Rio Grande.

After this year few more discoveries seem to have been made, though in 1449 Prince Henry took formal possession of the Azores for Portugal. Besides the fitting out and directing of all these expeditions, Prince Henry studied astronomy and mathematics at Sagres, where he caused the first observatory in Portugal to be erected. He had the Portuguese officers taught navigation by Mestre Jacomo of Majorca, whose services he secured.

Prince Henry died at Cape St. Vincent in 1460, after a life of unceasing work, and results such as few can show, and was buried at Lagos; but in the following year his body was removed to the beautiful convent at Batalha.

His great nephew, Dom Manuel, had a statue of him placed in the church of Belem; and in 1840 a monument was erected to him at Sagres at the instance of the Marquis de Sà de Bandeira.

Though his life's aim of discovering the way to India by the Cape was not to be realised by him, the Kings of Portugal loyally carried on his work; and thirty-seven years after his death, Vasco de Gama, a Portuguese 'gentleman of undaunted spirit,' sailed to Calcutta, after a voyage of two years and two months, by way of that Cape of Good Hope which means so much to us English, and to which Prince Henry the Navigator, himself of our blood, opened the path of the sea when he first sent his vessels round the dreaded Cape Bojador.—SEA-MAIDEN.

When John of Gaunt told his wife Constance that João I., King of Portugal, had chosen their daughter Philippa for his wife, she anxiously inquired of her husband what he thought of the young king, and received the reassuring reply: 'On my faith, he is an agreeable man and has the appearance of being a valiant one; he is much beloved of his subjects, who say they have not been so fortunate these hundred years; he is strong and well formed.' The King of Portugal made a wise choice. He and his wife

gave to their four sons, the Princes Duarte, or Edward (named after his great-grandfather, Edward III. of England), Pedro, Henry, and Ferdinand, a goodly heritage of virtues.

The first account of Prince Henry of Portugal, beyond the bare record of his birth at Oporto on the 4th of March, 1394, reads like a fairy tale. In the year 1415 three young princes, with the blessing of their dying mother, set forth from Portugal on an expedition to Morocco, meaning to win their knightly spurs by fighting against their hereditary foe the Moors. Having arrived at the city of Ceuta they attacked it with such fierce courage that they took it in one day. All fought bravely, but the third outshone the others in deeds of valour, so that his proud father wished to honour him above his brethren. Unlike the third brother of fairy tales, Prince Henry's generous heart could not bear the idea of being put first, and his father listened to his entreaties.

His fame spread abroad, and the Pope and three royal sovereigns invited him to take command of their respective armies, but Prince Henry wished to be more than a soldier. He took for his motto, 'Talent de bien faire,' and declared his intention of studying the science of navigation in hopes of some day reaching India by a voyage round the south point of Africa, and making other maritime discoveries, from information about Africa and Guinea picked up from the Moors.

In furtherance of this plan, in 1418 he went to live on the promontory of Sagres in Algarve, of which kingdom he was made governor. He had built the first observatory in Portugal, studied astronomy and mathematics with indefatigable zeal, and had his Portuguese officers taught navigation by Mestre Jacome from Majorca.

Being the grand master of the Order of Christ, the large revenues provided him with means to meet his heavy expenses.

In 1418 and 1420 he rediscovered Madeira and Porto Santo (these were afterwards granted to him by his brother Duarte when the latter came to the throne in 1433).

After this, for more than twelve years, all his plans came to nought, his expeditions were failures, his money seemed spent in vain, so that his nobles complained at the useless expense; men laughed at him for a foolish dreamer, but in spite of abuse and ridicule Prince Henry never grew disheartened. With quiet courage and indomitable perseverance he fitted out one expedition after another.

He embodied the 'two especial qualities' claimed for his countrymen by that quaint old writer, Father Joseph Texere, the Portuguese, 'happily differing from other nations, which are as familiar to them, as to laugh is proper to all men. The first is, they are extremely scrupulous of conscience; the second, they are exceeding constant in their resolutions, especially when they are assured that they are warranted by the law of God.'

At last success crowned his efforts. His brothers had always encouraged him in his undertakings; the brotherly love that subsisted between them was unusual in those days amongst royal kindred.

But this same brotherly love was a cause of grief to Prince Henry. His enthusiasm for expeditions had infected his youngest brother, and the latter in 1436 begged King Duarte to send him with a fleet to attack Tangiers.

In spite of the remonstrances of the Pope and Prince Pedro, King Duarte granted Prince Ferdinand's request, Prince Henry being in favour of it. The expedition failed. The army that landed was cut off, and only escaped total annihilation by Prince Ferdinand being left behind as hostage.

'The whirligig of time' had indeed brought in his revenges. It was twenty-one years since the three princes had captured Ceuta from the Moors, and now they would fain have offered it for Prince Ferdinand's ransom, but the Pope refused to allow it. As the Moors would accept

nothing else Prince Ferdinand had to remain in captivity. King Duarte grieved so much at his brother's imprisonment that it affected his health, and he died in 1438.

Five years after, Prince Ferdinand also died of cruel treatment at Fez. He bore his sufferings with such saintly patience that he was called 'the constant Prince.'

Thus sorrow brooded over Prince Henry's successes during these years. In 1441 Cape Branco was reached, and by 1443 the negro states in Senegal and Gambia were opened to commerce. About this time Henry VI. of England bestowed on him the riband of the Order of the Garter. In 1444-5 were discovered the river Senegal, Cape Verde, Cape St. Anne, Cabo dos Mastos and the Rio Grande.

In 1449 Prince Pedro was killed in battle, so Prince Henry was brotherless for the last eleven years of his life.

Fortunately King Affonso V., King Duarte's son, was at one with Prince Henry in favour of expeditions, and during the later years of Prince Henry's life many important voyages of discovery were made by Gomez and others sent out in the king's and Prince Henry's service.

Prince Henry died November 13, 1460, in his town in Cape St. Vincent, and was buried in the church of St. Mary in Lagos; afterwards his body was removed to the convent of Batalha. A statue of him was placed over the centre column of the side gate of the church of Belem by his great nephew, King Dom Manuel.

About fifty-nine years ago a monument was erected to his memory at Sagres, and deservedly, for the whole human race have reaped some advantage from the disinterested labours of the noble Prince Henry when he lived there.—WINIFRED SPURLING.

CLASS LIST FOR FEBRUARY.

DISTINCTION.

No. 7, Miranda.

CLASS I.

Peter, Philippa, Ema, Dinah Doe.

CLASS II.

Lindum, Durusha, Iona, Titwillow.

PRIZE WINNER FOR FEBRUARY.

Miss S. G. Newstead, 9, York Place, Clifton, Bristol.

SUBJECT FOR APRIL.

John Bunyan.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

(*A menagerie.*)

1. Who considered himself and the Cardinal the greatest folks present on a certain occasion?
2. Who was reproached by his master with being 'a stone—a very pebble-stone'?
3. Who knew that it was his bounden duty to protect the family from snakes?
4. Whom did John the Carpenter pity to the extent of giving her half his rum, and what was the result?

5. Who went to school every day and had the best of educations—
'French, music, and washing—extra'?

6. Find somebody worthy of 'being named in the same day' as the above.

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS.

1. The Jackdaw of Rheims, who—

'peered in the face
Of his Lordship's grace.
With a satisfied look, as if he would say,
"We two are the greatest folks here to-day!"'

(RICHARD BARHAM. 'Ingoldsby Legends.')

2. Lance's dog, Crab. (SHAKSPERE. 'Two Gentlemen of Verona,'
act ii. sc. 3.)

3. Rikki-Tikki-Tavi, the Mongoose. (RUDYARD KIPLING's First 'Jungle
Book.')

4. 'The Captain's Cow.' See HOOD's poem of same name. Result—
she—

'Is grown a very famous cow,
By giving rum-and-milk.'

5. The Mock Turtle. (LEWIS CARROLL. 'Alice in Wonderland,' chap. 9.)

6. Animals of all ages and all nations come to compete for a place in our
Menagerie. 'Grip the Raven' from 'Barnaby Rudge,' with 'Puss in Boots,'
seem to be the favourites, though several of Mrs. Ewing's animals have
votes. Some of the beasts mentioned are so serious in their natures that
it is feared they would not feel at all at home among the companions
offered them!

MARKS FOR FEBRUARY.

60 : *Eleanor, Irnham, Kiltiwake, Trimmer.* 50 : *A. C. R., Aspley Guise, Athena, Blanchelys, Blue Wings, Double Dummy, Germania, Helen, Holly Leaf, Isabel, Lenore, Penfeather, Sea-Maiden, Syndicate, The Blue Cat, White Cat.* 40 : *Dorfchen, E. T., Ethel Walkinson, Findhorn, Malaprop, Partridge, Scott, Skylark, S. Millard, W. Adey.* 30 : *Honeylands, M. R. A., Nemo.*

Mellon Mowbray is credited with 50, and *Bog-Myrtle* with 40 marks, but
they are requested to observe the *date for posting*.

Fourteen Streams is credited with 50 marks for January.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR APRIL.

('Pleasure delights in contrasts.')

1. 'There's nothing in the world so sweet as love;
And next to love the sweetest thing is —.'
2. 'There is some soul of goodness in things —,
Would men observingly distil it out.'
3. 'He makes no friend who never made —.'
4. 'Whose welth was —, whose plentie made him —.'
5. 'Knowledge by Suffering entereth,
And Life is perfected by —.'

Fill the blanks and give full references to all the above, and

6. Choose another quotation to match.

NOTICE.—Answers (to SEARCH QUESTIONS only) to be posted before the 25th of the month to Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon. 'Search Questions' to be written *outside* each envelope.

THIRD SHELF.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Chelsea China has received a great many replies to *Blue Roses*; but she has decided to leave the question of the new century to her betters. She will pump up all the proper sentiments whenever the Government thinks fit to order them!

'Earth is crammed with heaven,' &c., is in 'Aurora Leigh,' by Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—I always read with interest your correspondents, in fact all THE MONTHLY PACKET, and generally gain some kind of information from it. I wish some reader would give me their opinion on this subject, viz., *Can one be too broad-minded?* It seems to me one cannot be. The great fault of the world appears to be its exclusiveness and its many creeds. Could the word 'dangerous' be applied to a broad mind? If all our minds are made differently, does it not seem possible that every one can think differently and still be right, and therefore we can call no one's opinion false, while that person thoroughly believes it to be true. Can one ever be too tolerant for the opinions of others? Is it possible or necessary to alter the natural bend of one's mind? To me the best and safest guide in all things is natural instinct; can it ever lead astray? Should one do a thing because one is told it is right, or follow one's own reason? If every one in the world went their own way, and let others do the same, would it be a much worse world than it is at present, or is this carrying broad-mindedness too far? I am afraid all this sounds rather a muddle, but I wish some one would try to understand and answer. There are such a number of problems in life, and always the most interesting ones are the unsolvable. I never succeeded in arriving at an answer to any one of them. If some reader has been lucky enough to unravel one, will he please tell me it and the answer. It seems to me that a great many people, and those who are most influential, spend too much time over the past and too little over the present. They are far more interested in finding out why King So-and-so's reign was unsuccessful, why such and such a rebellion took place, &c., and in learning dead languages, than in any of the present-day questions—for instance, why so many people starve, why so many are ignorant, &c., &c. Perhaps in a hundred years' time we shall have clever men finding out the reasons for these errors and their remedies (when it is too late), and wondering how the nineteenth century could have been so blind, while they are falling into its mistake, and so on with the other ages. Our actions and works travel on, but our thoughts and minds remain behind. The world sadly needs a rest that the two may meet, and thoughts overtake actions. All the energy men have is wanted for the present; the past is but a dead thing, only so much of it should be known as helps the future. I am afraid I have gone very far away from my subject, and the best apology will be to end. Hoping some readers will tell me what they think, and answer my questions,

Yours sincerely,

RUBY.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—The paper on 'Celtic Art' in the February number was so interesting, and the style in such perfect harmony with the subject, that it seems a pity a minor blemish, occurring twice, should have crept into it. I refer to 'é'er,' used with the meaning of 'ere.' As the writer has such an admiration for perfection in detail, he or she might be only thankful to have the error pointed out. In a magazine of THE MONTHLY PACKET's calibre, such a blunder in print is apt to form a precedent. Will the writer, or Chelsea China herself, kindly tell me why Ireland is described as the 'Woman Country'? EINSAM.

NATURE NOTES.

Cheadle, Staffordshire, Jan. 28th.—A flock of Goldcrests (*Regulus cristatus*) were frequenting fir-trees at Eastwell, and picking off the eggs and larvæ of insects which are so injurious to the trees later in the year. Two Woodcocks (*Scolopax rusticula*) were flushed the same day out of the dry bracken, where they hide by day, and their brown and black plumage so nearly assimilates with the surroundings, that it is almost impossible to see these birds on the ground.

Feb. 2nd.—First snowdrop flower fully open. A sharp frost during the night, but a large slug (*Limax maximus*) was crawling over a stone wall at noon, showing what a low temperature these molluscs can withstand. My Green Lizard came out in the sun in the conservatory, and was very lively, feeding for the first time this year on a pupa of the Cabbage Moth (*Mamestra brassicae*).

Feb. 5th.—A troop of Long-tailed Tits (*Acredula caudata*), probably comprising one or two families, amongst the birch-trees, searching every nook and cranny for food, and evidently keeping together by their little twitterings uttered as they passed from tree to tree.

Feb. 10th.—The flowers of the White Butter Bur (*Petasites albus*) fully open, and have to be protected from the Wild Rabbits, which persistently eat them off when unguarded.

Feb. 11th.—Several colonies of the Garlic Snail (*Hyalinia alliaria*) found under stones of the ruins of Croxden Abbey, giving out a strong smell of garlic when handled—hence the name. Also large numbers of the Field Slug (*Agriolimax agrestis*), generally in pairs, with eggs laid in slight depressions scooped out in the earth. These slugs were almost all of a very dark, almost black colour. To search out the cause of the great variations in colour of this slug would be an interesting study.

Feb. 12th.—Furze in full flower, a few scattered flowers having been open all through this mild winter.

Feb. 19th.—Both male and female blossoms of the Hazel fully out. The female flowers, commonly called 'Catkins,' are well known to all, but the minute bright red male flowers of this tree are only known to careful observers of nature and form a very beautiful object for the microscope.

Feb. 21st.—A Badger (*Meles taxus*) was shown to me which had been found dead at the foot of a limestone cliff, known as 'Beeston Tor,' in North Staffordshire, and which, it is presumed, had fallen down the cliff and been killed. Badgers still survive in small numbers in this county, and it is hoped may be able to hold their own in their rocky retreats. A specimen of that rare visitor, the Grey Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*), commonly called the Butcher Bird, was shown to me at the same time, which had recently been shot near Alton, Staffordshire. Would that these rare birds could escape the prowling gunner and be spared to delight us with a glimpse of their pretty plumage in our country rambles!

Feb 22nd.—A Dipper (*Cinclus aquaticus*) was to-day flying along the course of the river Churnet. These charming little birds have been diminishing in numbers on our streams, through their nests being per-

sistently robbed of eggs, but it is hoped that the Wild Bird Protection Orders may save some of them in future.—EXORS.

Jan. 25th.—Saw a Dipper (*Cinclus aquaticus*) on the Ribble, by Mytton Bridge.

Jan. 26th.—Between Mytton and Tower Hodder Bridge saw Hazel catkins and heard the Peewits (*Vanellus cristatus*) crying.

Jan. 28th.—The Dipper sings as he flies from one rock to another.

Jan. 30th.—The owls cry to-night between 8 and 9 o'clock.

Feb. 14th.—Gathered a flower of *Nepeta glechoma* (Ground Ivy).

Feb. 18th.—The birds are busy pairing. I have watched three Black-birds, two cocks and one hen, in the garden. The cocks evidently wish to appear very brave to the hen, but seem very much afraid of each other. They hop about continually, the hen looking on, and occasionally they have a little fight, which does not last above a minute.—SKYLARK.

Feb. 22nd.—Walking down the new road between Ridbrook and Eltham, noticed that the Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*) is in flower for the first time this year; no sign of the leaves at present; am going to notice how long after the flowers' birth they will appear. Only other flowers out are chick-weed, daisies, and dandelions. All this month large flocks of Plovers have appeared in the fields between Ridbrook Farm and Eltham. There are two species of them, the Golden Plover (*Charadrius pluvialis*)—Whistling Plover they call it about here—and the Peewit, or Green Plover (*Tringa vanellus*). They seem to have a regular feeding-time, at four o'clock in the afternoon; it is to be hoped that it is only slugs and insects they are eating, and not the grain in the fields.—WINIFRED SPURLING.

Speranza and *Ethel M. Williams* send pretty descriptive papers.

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

QUESTIONS FOR APRIL.

7. Give an account of the connection of Mrs. Sherwood with Indian Missions.

8. A History of Bishop Corrie's Episcopate in Madras (*omit his earlier history*).

Books recommended; S.P.G. *Classified Digest*; *Under His Banner* (S.P.C.K.); and paper on 'Military Life in India Ninety Years Ago' in January number of MONTHLY PACKET; any life of Bishop Corrie, especially one in 'Lives of Missionaries' (S.P.C.K.).

Answers to be sent to Bog-oak, Industrial School, Andover, by May 1st.

CLASS LIST FOR JANUARY.

CLASS I.

Auskar, 20; M. P., 19; C. W., South Downs, 17; Ierne, 16.

CLASS II.

Constans et Fidelis, 14; Veritas, 13; Honeysuckle, 12.

REMARKS.

1. Of the seven maps of India sent, *Auskar's* is much the best—neat, clear, and accurate. C. W.: Just as excellent, except that she omits boundary lines. M. P. good. *Honeysuckle* puts Ceylon beside Southern India, whereas Lat. 8° N., which runs clear south of India, cuts through the middle of Ceylon. The province of India and Ceylon includes the

dioceses of Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Colombo, Lahore, Rangoon (which is not named in map by *Ierne* or *South Downs*, Travancore, Chhota, Nagpur, and Lucknow (two last not in *Honeysuckle's* map), Tinnevely (not in *Honeysuckle's* or *South Downs's*). *Ierne* and *South Downs* confuse theirs by giving political divisions, not dioceses.

2. Henry Martyn's Life has been done *con amore*. One member sends nearly fourteen pages of him. Bog-oak does not mind, but the length is not her fault! He was Chaplain of the East India Company, not Army Chaplain, though he ministered to soldiers frequently.

'MONTHLY PACKET' NOTICES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The readers of the 'Monthly Packet' are invited to address CHelsea CHINA on any subject the discussion of which occurs to them as likely to interest others, especially in connection with articles appearing in the Magazine.

CHINA CUPBOARD PRIZES—

Variety Specimens. Prize, monthly, 5s.

Search Questions (Who, When, and Where). Prize, for six months taken together, £1 1s.

Prose Competition. Monthly Prize, 5s., or 10s., according to merit.

RULES for the above—

(1) Papers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to CHelsea CHINA, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co., Limited; they must NOT be addressed to 'the Editors.' (2) Each envelope must be marked *outside* with the subject to which it refers. Papers under separate competitions or discussions must be in separate envelopes. (3) The correspondent's name and address must be written on every paper: the use of a *nom de plume* for the lists is optional. (4) If competitors fail to comply with any rule, their papers will be disqualified. (5) The real name of the prize-winner is published in each case. (6) There are no entrance fees. (7) Prizes cannot be taken by the same person twice in a half-year.

[The Editors of the 'Monthly Packet' will feel obliged if All Contributors will write their names and addresses clearly on their MSS., and will enclose stamps for return. Unless these conditions are complied with, the Editors cannot undertake to preserve, return, or enter into correspondence about MSS. Much trouble is saved if accompanying letters are enclosed in the parcel instead of being sent separately.

The utmost care is 'taken in returning MSS., but the Editors can only hold themselves absolutely responsible for such as are sent to them at their own request.]

THE MONTHLY PACKET.

NEW SERIES.

MAY, 1899.

THE CONQUEST OF LONDON.

BY DOROTHEA GERARD (MADAME LONGARD DE LONGGARDE),
AUTHOR OF 'A FORGOTTEN SIN,' 'A SPOTLESS REPUTA-
TION,' 'LADY BABY,' ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW.

WHEN the doctor was gone and Evelyn had been induced to lie down and Cissy been installed near the sick-bed, Philippa again went down to the garden. She could think better out of doors than in, and it was imperiously necessary that she should think of something before Evelyn awoke. Much about her sister had shocked her to-day, but more had grieved her. If to see Evelyn, whom she had deemed so strong, become so quickly weak, and to hear her say that not even her love for Ralph was worth the hardships undergone, had cruelly stabbed her idealism, the causes which had brought about these results were too painfully clear to her to allow criticism so much as to stir. It is possible and even probable that under these same circumstances Philippa's own attitude would have been different, but weighed down as she now was by the consciousness of her own shortcomings, she could only be dimly aware of this. It is not every one who is improved by trials; Evelyn certainly was not, nor was Cissy: the one sullen and defiant, demanding salvation at any cost, the other sharp and unjust. Even Adela, although a martyr in her way, was a rather spiritless, even if angelic sort of martyr, who would certainly have been of more use if she had managed not to go down at the first blow.

Such might have been Philippa's reflections had she been any one but just Philippa ; as it was they were quite different. With a new understanding she saw that Evelyn's egoism was only the egoism of misery, and felt pity for the misery, and no condemnation for the egoism. Her own fault, only her own fault again here ! On all sides the consequences of her rashness were confronting her.

What ways were there of getting money ? Not only money for this one emergency, but enough to prevent any such emergency recurring ? There were only two ways she knew of : selling or borrowing. There was next to nothing to sell now, except the house, and they had no power over that until they were all over twenty-five, and nobody to borrow from, except—Philippa frowned in painful thought as she walked on between the skeleton hedges. There *was* one person from whom she could easily borrow ; to whom only one word would be required, but the mere thought of it sent the blood to her cheek. Although she had not seen Lord Maurice Berners since their parting in London on the day after the Ball of the Prodigal Daughter, a few letters had been exchanged, just enough to show her that Adela's rejected suitor was anxious to keep at least his rank of family friend. Of course he knew of their present predicament, although only in a general way, and an expression dropped here and there in his letters had led her to suppose that nothing could make him happier than to be of use. That would be a way—a safe one too, since she knew for certain that no word would ever transpire, and Adela herself need never know. Ah, but that was just the thing ; had she the right to take such a step without Adela's consent ? At the recollection of how once before she had played fast and loose with her sister's dignity a sensation of burning shame rushed over her. The memory was still too painfully vivid to let her seriously contemplate anything like a repetition. No, Lord Maurice must be put aside as not meeting the case. And now, what remained ?

All at once, without warning, there came into her mind the recollection of the advertisement she had seen that morning in the *Times*. Would not that too be a way ? A desperate way, of course, but one in which only her own dignity would be in play, and had she not the right to do with that what she wanted, to sacrifice it—if necessary ? The right ? No, the obligation, or so it seemed to her just now. What could her

self-respect matter, so long as her sisters were saved ; the innocent and confiding sisters whom she had led into so tight a place, and who at any price must be brought out of it again ; whom could it regard if she chose to sell herself to a high bidder ? That was a point for her to fight out with her own conscience, and conscience was just now loudly applauding. The moral anguish involved only served to make the step appear more meritorious in her own eyes, and to Philippa's romantic cast of temperament the anguish was very keen indeed. Hitherto she had not had much time to think of marriage in the abstract, but whenever she thought of it it had seemed to her in a dim way to be a thing which only a great and deep passion—such a passion as she instinctively knew herself to be capable of—could make possible to her. To give up her chance of 'Love's young dream' would come incomparably harder to her than to the milder and far less intense Adela ; but it should be given up ; she had decided this already, almost within the same minute in which the advertisement had come back to her mind. In the new enthusiasm of self-sacrifice into which she had worked herself, the pain of the thought was not only bearable, but welcome ; in some curious way it did her good, making her feel one shade less guilty, since this was the beginning of the work of expiation.

It should be a full and frank expiation, without any nonsense about it ; no cherishing of hopes that the advertiser might possibly take her fancy and turn out to be a desirable husband ; no blinding of herself to the full import of her act. If he had a straight back and were a gentleman, so much the better for her—it was more luck than she deserved ; but his having a crooked one and being a cad could not by any possibility affect her resolution of marrying him, so long as he would take her. In her eyes it wasn't a marriage at all, but simply a bargain, a simple process of sale and barter, and so long as he kept his part of the bargain, which would of course consist in unlimited generosity towards her sisters, she would keep hers. Not with one word would she try to beautify the thing, not one veil would she consent to throw over the nakedness of a fact which she acknowledged to be brutal, without being quite able in her present state of mental exaltation quite to realise its brutality.

Within five minutes more Philippa was hunting for the *Times*. She read the advertisement over with different eyes

this time, but she did not linger over it. It would be safer, she felt, not to give herself over-much time for reflection. She was quite aware that the thing might appear in a different light later on, but she was determined to profit by the moment at which she felt her courage to be strung up to the requisite point.

‘Photograph required.’ Here was a new thing to think of, and one which prevented reflection, by giving her immediate occupation, for the question arose as to whether any good photograph was still on the premises, any likely to make the desired impression on the ‘amiable and domesticated bachelor.’ A long hunt in various drawers brought to light the last of the cabinet photographs taken in London, a very successful one by good luck, in a riding habit and hat. Long and critically Philippa looked at her own face, wondering how it would impress a stranger. She had never analysed her features before, and now recognised, with astonishment ! that she was more than good-looking—very nearly beautiful. Looking at her own eyes she wondered whether they were condemned for the rest of life to gaze on an unloved husband ; examining her lips she asked herself whether they were to be pressed by other, indifferent ones. With a guilty start she roused herself from these dangerous reflections, and resolutely pushed back the picture into its wrapping. This, accompanied merely by the statement that the writer would be twenty-one on her next birthday and had received the education of a gentlewoman, was put in breathless haste into an envelope and addressed to the *Times* under the number given by the advertiser. Then in equally breathless haste the donkey-cart was ordered out and the momentous missive confided to the care of Jem, the reigning ‘Hottentot,’ and then only Philippa sat down, exhausted but with the feeling of a great thing achieved. Of course there still remained the question as to whether she would be preferred to the other candidates which were certain to come forward, but on this point she did not feel seriously disturbed. What she had done appeared to herself so gigantic that it was almost certain to meet with its reward—or its punishment, according to whichever point of view you chose to adopt. She was thankful beyond words to have come to some resolution before Evelyn was awake ; and when, after a heavy sleep which lasted into the afternoon, the tired traveller came downstairs it was with a new and hopeful fervour that

Philippa embraced her sister, and with a triumphant smile that she answered her questioning look.

'Yes, I have thought of something,' she said before Evelyn had even spoken; 'but it is something I cannot talk about until it is certain; you will have to wait a few days more, just till I see how it turns out; but I have hopes, great hopes, and it is something that will help us all, and for always. Trust everything to me, but don't question me, Evelyn dear!'

She did not herself think that Evelyn would have to wait long; marriages that are purely business marriages usually have the advantage of rapidity on their side.

'You look quite different from what you did this morning,' said Evelyn wonderingly; 'what is the matter with you, Phil? What can you have done?'

'My duty, nothing but my duty,' answered Philippa, with eyes whose brilliant light puzzled Evelyn, even while it vaguely reassured her. She had always had a deep-rooted confidence in her sister's power of meeting emergencies, and she felt this confidence stirring in her now. It sufficed to keep her from further questions, and resigned her to the patience which Philippa declared to be necessary. Something in the other's manner had strengthened her moral woman even more than the glass of wine pressed on her by Philippa that morning had strengthened her physical one.

Philippa slept sounder that night than she had slept for many nights, partly no doubt because it was Evelyn who was keeping the night-watch, but more yet because of the consciousness of having taken a decisive step. Perhaps it was the very depth and peacefulness of that slumber that put so profound a gulf between to-day and to-morrow, seeming to lay something as wide as a world or a lifetime between the points of view of then and now. It was not the same Philippa that went to bed that night and that got up next morning, for in truth it had not been the real Philippa who had yielded to that moment of weakness. *That* Philippa had been physically and mentally well-nigh exhausted, heavy-eyed with want of sleep, almost hopeless and rather desperate. The one who awoke to day was the Philippa of old, buoyant and of a tenacity of hope that was almost impossible to quench. Very difficult indeed did this one find it to understand what that one had done. A newspaper advertisement? was it actually conceivable, that she had answered it? that she had seriously

contemplated bartering herself basely for hard cash—she, the proud and unapproachable Philippa? And yet, if she could trust her memory and her wits, she had done much more than only think of it. As the truth rushed in upon her she felt the hot blood shooting to her face. Surely, ah, surely, she must have been mad for just a little time. There *must* be some other way of succouring Evelyn; and as for the future, that must take care of itself. And this complete transformation of sentiment, this reversal of points of view was caused by exactly nine hours' sound sleep! Alas for the slavery of even the proudest spirit to the body!

Philippa was not one to sit down and bewail an irrevocable fact; indeed, until the last effort had been made, she refused to consider it irrevocable. Her cheeks were still tingling when already she had got on her shoes and stockings. Half an hour later she came down with her hat on, and stood by quivering with impatience while the boy put Bobbin in the cart.

'Be I to goa to the villaige?' he inquired, a little scared by his mistress's look.

'No, I need nobody; I am going myself.'

It had occurred to her that her letter had probably missed yesterday's post, in which case it would still be lying at the village post-office. The post-mistress was a kind and friendly old lady; why should she not consent to return her the critical missive?

Never before in his long life had Bobbin been urged into so comparatively desperate a pace as the one in which he to-day traversed the space between the cottage and the village. The honest donkey did his best, but hay had been scarce lately, and Bobbin's condition consequently anything but prime. Yet, as matters stood, not even the fleetest trotter that ever was between shafts could have affected the case, since, as the post-mistress smilingly informed Philippa, the yesterday's letter had just beautifully saved its distance.

'Not two minutes to spare, miss,' she pleasantly explained; 'in the very act of closing the bag I was when the cart drove up. Lor, miss, but you *are* feeling the cold this morning!' she added, aghast. 'Can't recollect ever seeing your face so pinched-like, nor your eyes so big. You'll let me get you a drop of hot tea, won't you, while you just sit down?'

Philippa struggled neither against the tea nor the sympathy. The former she even drank gratefully when it came, for she

had left the house fasting, and either the raw morning air or her emotions were making her feel curiously faint. It would never do to make an exhibition of herself, and neither was there any reason to hurry home, since Cissy was now beside Adela. Just for a minute or two it felt as though there were no reason more for exerting herself in any direction. Having sunk as low as she had done by yesterday's act, nothing surely could ever again greatly matter.

Her photograph ! It was there that lay the sharpest sting. With a distinctness that was painful she saw it before her mind's eye now as she had seen it yesterday with her bodily eyes. She could never quite stop seeing it, she thought ; even if she never heard of it again, the thought always would be with her that she had given herself away. Into whose hands would the unlucky picture fall ? What depths of degradation might yet be in store for her ? Ah, if Bobbin had only not been so unreasonably brisk yesterday ! If Jem had only lingered by the way to hunt a weasel or trap a bird, as he was so prone to do, but of course never at the right time !

'It seems to be my fate,' sighed Philippa to herself as she despondently took her place again in the cart, 'always to be doing things which I want to undo again in the next moment !'

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

THE months that now followed were perhaps on the whole the hardest part of Philippa's penance. True, the financial strain of the situation had been a little, a very little, relieved, owing partly to Adela's recovery, partly to the fact that Mrs. Wheeler, succumbing before a new appeal which desperation had made too point-blank to be resisted, actually had found ways and means of repaying part of the sum borrowed by Maggie in summer. Evelyn's passage-money had come out of that, and Evelyn herself was in Canada by this time, from where she wrote sullenly resigned but by no means cheerful letters. But the lifting of the worst pressure could not bring anything like peace to Philippa's mind, nor help her to forget the rash step taken in the moment of her extremest need. Silently and in

terror she waited for the result, trembling at the arrival of every post, lest by bringing to her a direct missive from the advertiser it should seal her degradation. But day by day passed and nothing came, no further sign, not even the faintest movement of reaction, nothing but her own vivid recollection to assure her of what she had done. If it had not been for the acuteness of that memory she might almost have believed that she had not done it at all, but only dreamed it. Little by little, as the days turned into weeks, and these into months, which slowly and heavily but uneventfully trailed past, the disturbance of her spirit began to settle. After all it was possible that the thing would die a natural death, that the whole black episode would remain for ever buried in oblivion. At the thought she began to breathe again.

The apathy which on the critical morning had momentarily overcome her in the post-office had not been of long duration; long ago she had taken up her burden again, and had been trudging on with it ever since, without much joyfulness, but with that dogged consciousness of duty which makes a breakdown almost impossible. Adela had been pulled through her illness, although not without a few days of acute anxiety, and had been fed up on every scrap that Philippa could spare from her own mouth.

Fanny had been dismissed according to the resolution formed in November, and, despite the protests of her sisters, it was Philippa who had turned herself into cook and housemaid all in one. There was always Jem, of course, to beat the carpets and do the rough work, but the strain remained hard all the same, and, despite all her courage, there were moments when Philippa, out of sheer bodily and mental weariness, felt the urgent need of indulging in that incomparable feminine luxury known as a 'good cry.'

One of these moods was upon her on a certain mild Saturday in February, when, leaving Jem at home to scour the kitchen floor, she had started alone with Bobbin to fetch the week's store of groceries. Spring was setting in early this year, but the faint green flush on the downs and the snatches of blue sky overhead only served to intensify the depression that weighed to-day on Philippa. It was too like what it had been last year at this time when her spirits had been at so different a level, and when the world seemed open before her. As it so happened it was exactly a year to-day since she had received

the news which had resulted in the London campaign. What a quantity of hopes and of disappointments lay between then and now ! As Philippa watched Spangles and Jabberwock joyfully chasing the crows over the downs she indulged in quite a lot of instructive reflections. Neither Spangles nor Jabberwock had ever in their lives caught a crow, yet every day each recommenced the chase with an unquenchable hope, apparently unconscious of the contemptuous attitude of the crows themselves, who, aware of their security, seemed to take a particular pleasure in skimming away within a few yards of their frantic noses, only to alight on the nearest bush and croak down sarcastically at their maddened pursuers. Exactly as unreasonably hopeful a spirit had Philippa herself possessed last year at this time, but now how sobered by experience ! Saturday, too, was always a particularly fatiguing day for the amateur cook and housekeeper combined, and the outlook, consequently, looked blacker than usual. The way that stretched ahead seemed so long and so dreary, was there never to be any turning ? Was she condemned to pass her life in this enervating drudgery, to bear the burdens of her sisters as well as her own, to be always the responsible one, the one appealed to, leaned on, on whom every decision fell, never in her turn to be able to lean on another, always to have to give counsel and help, and never to receive it ? It was a heavier burden for her young shoulders than she even knew, and at moments threatened to break them down.

The slender store of groceries had soon been laid in, and Bobbin's head was turned once more homewards ; but so insinuating was the mildness of the afternoon that, against her better consideration, Philippa forebore to press the pace. Just outside the village a tuft of anemones caught her eye, the first she had seen this season, and shone so white among the naked bushes that, despite the heaviness of her heart, she felt compelled to get down and fetch them.

A little further on began the grey wall of the cemetery, which she never passed without sending a thought over to the mother who slept beyond it. To-day she abruptly pulled up Bobbin at the gate ; where better could she lay these white flowers than on the mound beside which she had prayed so often for strength and courage ? An irresistible desire to see that green hillock again seized upon her just now ; this, she told herself, exactly this was what she had wanted all along.

Hastily alighting, she made fast Bobbin to a convenient bush, and, with the anemones in her hand, struck the familiar path. Here in the shelter of the wall close beside which Mrs. Venning lay, the grass was greener than in the open, and among the weeping willows the birds were singing songs that did not sound in the least funereal. Having found the spot, Philippa stood still, and gazed down long and intensely at the headstone which bore her mother's name. How still she was lying beneath her green coverlet that not even a grass blade should quiver ! What repose in this balmy silence, pierced only by the joyous bird-notes ! She indeed need fear no more the heat of the sun, nor anything that the winter could do to her ; above all—and it was this which by contrast to the sordid anxieties which crowded the joy out of each of her days, touched Philippa almost with a pang of envy—she need no longer care to 'clothe and eat.' In face of this almost overpowering rest the cruelty of her present struggle came over Philippa as it had never come before. One quick glance she threw around her, then, seeing herself entirely alone, fell upon her knees on the damp earth, and with the anemones pressed anyhow to her face, burst into passionate tears. She had known they were coming and made no effort to restrain them, aware that she would feel all the better and stronger for them when they were passed. What more favourable opportunity could she have for one of those bursts of grief which she always took care to indulge in well out of her sisters' sight ? The very depth of the gasping sobs that shook her down to the ground were like the tearing of fetters and the opening of prison doors.

So full were her ears of the sound of her own grief that the noise of a slight scuffle outside—a scuffle that consisted of a clatter and several bumps, mixed up with a great deal of barking—passed entirely unnoticed. The facts of the case were that Bobbin was beginning to find the halt unreasonably long. He was a staid donkey, as a rule, but either the spring air had slightly turned his elderly head, or else more likely a particularly enticing tuft of the newly sprouting grass had caught his watchful eye ; at any rate, without much difficulty he emancipated himself from Philippa's careless fastenings, to the intense delight of the dogs, who instantly abandoned the crows in order to make rushes at his hairy heels. This was a circumstance on which Bobbin had not counted, and over which he got so flurried that, forgetting

all about the tuft he had meant to reach, he began to back towards the bank, desperately and so successfully that within that same minute both he and the cart were at the bottom of it, but, alas, not right side uppermost !

Having recovered all the senses he ever possessed Bobbin attempted to struggle to his feet, but there seemed to be something wrong about one of them which declined to be planted firmly on the ground, and after one or two futile attempts he sank back into a half lying posture which the strain of the harness made by no means luxurious, and over his shoulder mournfully contemplated the wheel which loomed almost horizontally above his head, as well as the scattered parcels which his triumphant enemies were already busily examining. The rice and coffee were sniffed at and contemptuously rejected, the flour passed by doubtfully to be returned to, probably, in case nothing better was coming. But the butter was clearly voted a success. Jabberwock, who had been the first discoverer, soon had to abandon all hope of defending his treasure, and after only a slight scrimmage settled down peacefully to the division of the spoil. All this Bobbin, who was honesty itself—at least so far as butter was concerned—saw with horror-stricken eyes, grieved to the heart at his own helplessness to prevent the crime. Truly he was fallen among thieves, and no good Samaritan on the way to deliver him from a position that was painful both physically and mentally.

Stay ! What was that ? The sound of hoofs not his own. Lifting his head as high as it would go Bobbin could just catch sight of an approaching rider, the first person who had passed since the moment of the accident. He was coming along slowly too, with his reins hanging loose on his horse's neck, evidently enjoying the beauty of the evening. All the more chance of his attention being arrested, thought Bobbin hopefully.

Bobbin could not know that even if he had been going like the wind nothing by the roadside was likely to escape the keen eyes of this particular rider, whom the experience of many years and many climes had taught to be for ever on the look-out to the right and to the left, to the front as well as to the back, for anything that could be either a danger or a succour, and in countries in which dangers abound far more than does succour. Before even Bobbin had seen him he had seen Bobbin and was considering in his mind what the spec-

tacle might portend. Having reached the spot he alighted with the alacrity of a man who has long ago made up his mind, and leaving his horse on the road, descended the steep bank. So much as a matter of course did he begin his investigations that the usually so bellicose dogs omitted to protest, and even instinctively desisted from their operations on the butter, having perhaps caught sight of the stout hunting-whip in his hand and not liking its look. Seated in a respectful half-circle they looked on while the stranger first examined Bobbin's foot and then unbuckled the harness. In some way which was indescribable to Bobbin himself the donkey found himself helped to his three sound feet and brought to the top of the bank, where he was thankful to stand passive while the welcome Samaritan was seeing to the cart. It was a light vehicle, and to the stranger's evidently great muscular strength it seemed no heavy task to right it and drag it up to the road, after which he once more descended the bank to carefully collect the scattered parcels. This point reached he looked about him for the first time. Where there is a cart there must be an owner ; but, scan the horizon as he would, no such personage was forthcoming. For a few puzzled moments the situation remained a mystery, then, while still looking about him and mentally debating on his next step, a new sound fell on his ear—a heavy, breathless, indescribable sound, which yet was unmistakably human, and coming from the other side of the long wall beside which he found himself standing. He had scarcely noticed the wall before, but looking at it now attentively he easily recognised it as the wall of a cemetery. This recognition was at the same time an explanation of that sound ; those were sobs that were coming from over there—a woman's sobs, as another moment assured him. Some unhappy, perhaps desperate, woman was crying out her heart at the other side of that grey wall, and was far too busy with her grief to think of her cart and donkey. As the situation began to explain itself to his mind a sense of discomfort took hold of him. In face of the unguardedness of those sobs something of the guilty feeling of the eavesdropper stole over him ; to listen to this abandonment of grief was as bad as seeing a soul in undress. To move a little further from the gate was no solution of the difficulty, for it would not do to go out of sight, as little as it would do to abandon the injured donkey. Besides, he had work to do. Having considered

the situation for only a few seconds, he had taken a knife out of his pocket and begun to bore a set of new holes in the vacant harness. While he worked away, trying hard to hear nothing, his imagination was busy against his own will with the unseen woman within the cemetery. What sort of figure would presently appear in the gateway to relieve him of his charge? Would it be some old woman now weeping on the grave of her son? No, the voice somehow sounded too young for that; more likely it was a young widow who had lately buried her husband, and was bewailing in him not only a lost happiness, but also the breadwinner of the family. To judge from the look of the little cart it was not likely to be anybody with whom bread was very plentiful; witness the pitifully light parcels of groceries which formed the cargo.

He was still hard at work, both with fingers and fancy, and the sobs had been subsiding for several minutes and finally died away into silence, when the sound of a footstep already close to the gate induced him to become very much absorbed in the strap he was operating on. At the gate the steps paused abruptly, and now perforce he turned round. A tall, slender figure in a shabby grey dress was standing in the enclosure, looking in evident perplexity towards the group on the road. At sight of the stranger she hastily pulled down a much-worn veil, and after another moment of hesitation slowly advanced on to the road.

‘Has anything happened?’ she asked uncertainly.

‘Not very much, fortunately,’ said the rescuer, careful not to look at her after that first glance, and yet, just because of that one glimpse, anxious to look again. Not that the face, with its swollen red eyelids and the quiver of the muscles about the mouth, was particularly attractive to look at in this moment, but because it struck him with an unexplained sense of familiarity. He could not remember ever having seen her before, and yet he was quite certain that he knew that poise of head and sweep of eyebrows.

‘Your donkey seems to have backed down the bank, to judge from the position I found him and the cart in. The parcels——’

‘Are they lost?’ She interrupted him with almost a cry of pain. ‘The coffee and rice? Surely they are not all gone?’

Philippa did not stop to reflect that pathos applied to

groceries might possibly appear ludicrous to a stranger ; the thing was too terribly serious to her. Fortunately he seemed to miss the funny side of the matter.

‘Everything is here,’ he gravely, even earnestly replied, ‘even the butter—that is, as much of it as the dogs had left over.’

As he turned to her full with the parcels in his hands their eyes for the first time met. That glance was followed by a moment of silence—puzzled silence on his side, astonished silence on hers. That feeling of undefined familiarity had come over him again, but it was nothing to the astonishment which Philippa experienced. For her there was nothing vague or undefined about the experience, since in one instant and without a shadow of doubt she had recognised the passer-by who had come to her aid last summer on the day of the Drawing Room. She had only to look at him once in the eyes to know that the rescuer of now was the rescuer of then. The face which for weeks had so obstinately haunted her, which she had spied about for in vain in every London ball-room, had met her to-day on a solitary country road, miles away from London. Her first impulse was to claim acquaintance, her second to ignore the truth. Instinctively she felt that he did not know her again, and the idea of betraying that her memory was the longer of the two was disagreeable. Yet it was she who spoke first after that pause.

‘This is more than conscientious,’ she said, with a forced laugh, ‘this is scrupulous. Do you really suppose that I am going to eat their leavings ? Here, Jabberwock ! Spangles ! Finish what you have begun !’ And seizing the remnant of the butter she flung it out on to the road. Perhaps the thought of seeing her own poverty thus indecently exposed—for it seemed to her that the stranger could not help knowing that this was the end of the breakfast butter for a week—had made her disdainful gesture more vehement, at the same time as it sent a bright wave of blood to her pale face.

The unknown man said nothing as he turned back to the harness.

‘Why have you unharnessed Bobbin ?’ she asked, still with a little disdain in her voice, ‘and why are you not harnessing him again ?’

‘Because he cannot take you home,’ was the unmoved reply ; ‘his left hind foot is far too badly sprained for that.’

'Sprained? Oh, my poor Bobbin!' The disdain had melted on the instant into genuine concern. 'Does it hurt him much? Will he get well again?'

'Certainly he will, but not quite to-day.'

'That means that I shall have to walk home; but the cart——'

'No, you need not walk unless you like. My brown here is quite used to harness, but I have had to make a few new holes in order to get this to fit him. I hope you don't object?'

'To the horse or to the holes? Of course not, but you——'

'I shall drive you back to your home, if you will tell me where it is.'

Philippa stood doubtful. The thought of the rather pitiable physiognomy of that home made her shrink from the idea suggested.

'If you would rather not,' said her new acquaintance, before she had spoken, 'and if you think you can manage the brown alone, I can lead the donkey instead, for he has to be got home too, you know.'

'You lead the donkey?' said Philippa aghast.

'Yes, why on earth not? I have been the herder of much stranger animals in my day. But it will be safer if you let me drive you, for the mare is not always quite manageable.'

'And Bobbin?'

'I have thought of that too. We can tie him on at the back of the cart and let him hobble along behind us. Of course we shall not get on very fast, but if you do not live far off——'

'I do live very far off,' said Philippa, with a weary sigh, 'but I suppose there is no help for it.'

It certainly did seem a little adventurous to start on a long drive just as dusk was falling with a man whom she knew absolutely nothing about, but actually there seemed no help for it. Although he had nominally left her the choice, Philippa from the first had felt that the matter was already decided. With a docility which astonished herself she found herself submitting to all his arrangements in the same way that she had submitted to his peremptory orders on the day of the Drawing Room. And presently she was sitting beside him on the narrow seat of the cart, with Bobbin limping along mournfully behind them. The sun was sinking fast now; at this rate it would be dark before they reached home, yet from the moment that she found herself installed all apprehension left

Philippa. All that she remained aware of was a strangely new excitement, through the depth of which she caught momentary glimpses of a strangely new repose. How restful it was to watch those strong hands on the reins and to know that for a little time, a very little time only, she need not think for herself! She was glad the drive was going to be necessarily long; the experience of having a protector was too precious to be lightly parted with. The strangest part about the experience was that she felt no further curiosity concerning the protector's personality. He had named himself as little as on the first occasion, but Philippa scarcely noticed it, feeling dimly that a name could neither add to nor detract anything from the present pleasing sensation.

Of conversation there was not very much during the hour and a half that their slow progress lasted; what subject could two people have in common who did not even know each other's names? A few directions concerning the road, a few remarks upon Bobbin's accident was all that presented itself naturally, being regularly followed by long silences; the art of conventional conversation was evidently as unfamiliar to him as it was to her. Once only Philippa abruptly broached a personal subject. Thinking over the events of the afternoon it had suddenly struck her that if this man had been standing at the churchyard gate for long he must almost unavoidably have heard the sound of her wild weeping. At the thought she bit her lip and said without preliminary in her rapid, somewhat jerky way—

'It is my mother who is buried over there—where you found me, I mean.'

'Has she been dead for long?' asked the stranger, gazing straight away over the horse's head.

'For four years about; but it doesn't seem to get easier, somehow. You see, I need her so badly.'

The last words were scarcely said above her breath, being meant only for herself, but this man's hearing was as acute as his sight.

'I can imagine what it feels like to bury a mother,' he said with a quite marvellous gentleness in his usually so crisp and clean-cut accents, 'although, thank God, I have mine still.'

The vibration in the deep voice went straight to the girl's heart; instinctively she felt that here was genuine sympathy.

But it would not do to say anything further, as a lump in her throat warned her, and the consequence was that this new conversation likewise died away.

And yet the road did not appear long, not to Philippa at least, who drank in the tepid air as she had never drunk it in before, and spied each tuft of flowers by the way with an eagerness she had not known for long. How much fresher they looked, how much fairer they shone than the crushed anemones which she had left lying in a heap on the green mound over there, but which surely would not be less acceptable to the dead mother because of being drenched with tears instead of dew!

'What a way of thorns this must be to Bobbin!' said Philippa at last, abruptly rousing herself from what seemed an unjustifiable enjoyment of her own position. 'Are you sure his foot will get well?'

'With proper treatment, yes.'

'Proper treatment!' sighed Philippa. 'I wonder how Jem understands that?'

'I shall give him the necessary directions,' said the stranger, returning to his short, almost peremptory tone. 'It is quite a simple matter. Is this the right turning?'

'Yes,' said Philippa, thankful that it was now too dark to let the real character of the primitive avenue be apparent, and yet sorry that the end was reached.

'Will you send me the boy immediately?' her companion said as she alighted, and then just as she was wondering in what words she was to thank him, he added a little more quickly—

'You have no Elliman's Embrocation, I suppose?'

'No, I don't even know what it is.'

'I will send you some over—no, I will bring it to you. It will be safer if I apply it myself for the first time. I suppose I may bring it over?' he added as an after-thought.

'Certainly—by all means,' stammered Philippa, feeling once more that no choice was left her.

Then this was, after all, not to be quite the end?

CHAPTER XIX.

SCRAPS.

THE first thing Mr. Dyson did on reaching home was to go straight to a certain drawer in his writing-table and pull out a packet of letters which lay there loosely tied together with a yellow cigar ribbon. There was a look of unmistakable perplexity on his face as he opened them one by one, the expression of a man who is tormented by a memory which he cannot quite grasp. The letters were of various sizes and shapes, but they were alike in each containing a photograph. Twenty-three there were of them altogether : youthful and moderately youthful faces, pretty and plain, although mostly the latter, simpering and grave (generally the former), and accompanied by missives whose contents would have furnished a fashionable novelist with character studies for the whole of a successful career. Since the day when he had first passed them in review the owner of Swanmere had not looked at them again, nor let any of his friends look at them either. Their appearance as the result of a joke which he had almost forgotten had taken him so completely aback that the effect was almost painful. The discovery of the number of women ready to barter themselves for money at the first word had somehow more grieved than amused him, and this feeling of half shame it was that had caused him to throw the whole bundle into a drawer and turn the key upon it, much to the disappointment of Mr. Marryatt, who had vainly endeavoured to get a view of what he termed the 'matrimonial gallery.' All he got instead was a somewhat gruff piece of advice to mind his own business. In vain he protested that the business was his, since the advertisement had issued from his own, unaided brain.

'You should have given your address, then,' was the ungracious reply, 'instead of dragging me into this tomfoolery.'

'And you won't make an album of them?'

'Certainly not ; more likely a bonfire.'

In the end he did not use them for either purpose. Although vaguely disgusted, he was, owing no doubt to some peculiarity in his nature, much too sorry for his unknown correspondents to expose their faces or their often faultily spelled epistles to the criticism of his acquaintances. At the same time, however,

he thought of them altogether too little to put any importance upon the destruction of these epistles, and in the enjoyment of his new life had soon well-nigh forgotten the episode.

And yet not quite ; for to-day, while asking himself where he had before seen the face of his new acquaintance, it was one of these twenty-three photographs which came back to his mind. At a dozen of them he threw but a glance and passed on ; the thirteenth it was which put the clue into his hand. Yes, surely those were the very same forehead and eyebrows, this was the same so serenely pure curve of neck on which he had gazed that afternoon ; the eyes that looked at him so straight from under the stiff brim of the riding-hat were not swollen with weeping, but almost he could swear that they were the same eyes which had met his just outside the church-yard gate. The letter which went along with the picture had, even at the time, by its brevity, momentarily arrested his attention, being, in fact, scarcely a letter at all, but only a simple statement. He looked at it again with a new feeling of curiosity and with a growing astonishment. Somehow it seemed to him almost impossible to imagine that the girl whom he had just accompanied to her home should be identical with this unknown correspondent. Although knowing nothing of her it seemed very hard to reconcile the step here taken with the impression which, even in these few hours, he had gained of her whole personality. In no way did she give him the idea of a woman ready to stoop so low as this step implied. Could the hand which had written these scanty but portentous lines be the same that had so disdainfully flung the remnant of butter to the dogs ? Could so regal a carriage conceal so purchasable a heart ?

It was a problem whose solution could not fail to be interesting to such a student of human nature as Mr. Dyson had become in his long wanderings, and to recognise such a problem was with him to resolve to solve it. He was glad he had had that idea about the embrocation ; it would give him the opportunity of assuring himself whether or not he was mistaken in his supposition, whether the whole thing did not perhaps rest on one of those extraordinary likenesses which lie at the bottom of so many errors. It seemed almost too strange a coincidence to find one of these far-off and shadowy correspondents whom he had never counted on meeting in the flesh, established almost at his gates. Whom could she be,

and whom did she belong to? He would prefer to find out by himself, rather than through inquiries.

Next forenoon at an early hour he was dismounting at the door of Gilham, and this time there was no friendly dusk to throw a veil over the broken paling and ill-plastered house-front. Before even he had put his foot to the ground Mr. Dyson had made quite a number of notes in his mind. Nothing seemed to be stirring that he could see; by some strange chance not even a dog was about. The look of the place made him suddenly aware that his appearance might possibly be more of an intrusion than a benefit; instinctively he felt that the ringing of that somewhat rusty bell would be likely to produce an uncomfortable flurry behind that blistered door. He looked at it and desisted, and, having considered the situation for a few minutes, proceeded to lead his horse to the back of the house. There too was no one visible, but a stable door stood open, through which Mr. Dyson unhesitatingly penetrated in search of his patient, whom he presently found sadly contemplating an empty crib. The next thing obviously was to set to work bandaging the injured foot, which had swelled considerably since yesterday, but to do this a linen strip was necessary, and this of course could only be procurable in the house. Here was at once a necessity and a pretext, and, nothing loth, Mr. Dyson made his way across the little cobble-paved yard to a back door, which presumably led to the servants' quarters. Opening it he found himself inside a small kitchen, and face to face with what, judging from her white apron and rolled-up sleeves, must be the cook. She was stooping over a big pot full of water which she was attempting to lift on to the fire, and at his entrance turned round impatiently, not having succeeded in raising her pot from the ground.

'Is it you?' he said involuntarily, standing still with amazement, just within the door.

'Yes, it is I,' replied Philippa after one moment of consternation. Her first impulse had been to turn and flee, to hide under the dresser, inside the clock case—anywhere, to get out of sight; the second, on the contrary, had been to stand her ground and defiantly to brave out the situation. Since it could not be masked it had better be ruthlessly exposed. She stood now looking at him full, scarlet up to her hair-roots, but not flinching before his gaze.

'I am so sorry,' murmured Mr. Dyson on some unaccountable impulse, and likewise flushing with the discomfort of the situation.

'You have come about the embrocation, I suppose,' said Philippa almost coldly. 'It is very kind of you, certainly, but I did not expect you till the afternoon.'

Suddenly her colour deepened by another shade, and she began fumbling at her sleeves, remembering her exposed arms, towards which his eyes had unconsciously strayed, for they were well moulded and white and as unlike as possible to the typical cook's arms.

'Have you got the stuff with you?' she inquired a little hastily.

'Yes, and I only require a linen strip to spread it on. Perhaps you——'

'Jem is gone for the milk, but he will be back directly.'

'Oh, then, if you will tell one of the other servants——'

'There are no other servants,' said Philippa shortly. 'I shall give you what you need as soon as I am done here,' and she stooped again towards the big pot, but this was too much for Mr. Dyson.

'Leave that alone!' he said so imperiously that Philippa, startled, stood upright, and looked on impassive while he raised the heavy vessel to the position required. 'Do you not know that it is madness to lift a weight that is beyond your strength?' he asked in a tone of almost stern reproof.

'It has to be done,' was all that Philippa found presence of mind to say, and she said it with the air of a scolded child, and hurriedly adding, 'I shall bring you the linen,' quickly left the kitchen.

When Bobbin's leg had been made comfortable Mr. Dyson, who had been working away with an obstinate frown upon his sallow but handsome face, went straight back to the kitchen, where he found Philippa now occupied with energetically kneading the dough for a pie-crust. While washing his hands in the water he had asked for he watched her sideways and evidently with a critic's eye.

'You are not taking hold of it the right way,' he observed after a minute; 'more pressure of the ball of the hand.'

Philippa looked up in a mixture of astonishment and indignation. 'How can you possibly know anything about it?'

‘Through having made my own pie-crusts for a dozen years or so. I could qualify for more things than you suspect, and a cook is one of them. If you will let me get at it for a minute I will soon prove my point.’

In sheer amazement Philippa stepped back, and was presently looking on incredulously at her visitor’s exceedingly businesslike operations upon the dough. Never had she seen a man to whom everything, from relieving a fainting lady to mending a harness or kneading a crust, seemed to come so naturally, and whom nothing seemed able to embarrass. She could not explain him to herself at all.

‘I do believe you could make a pudding if you tried!’ she exclaimed, with an irrepressible laugh, unable any longer to resist the humour of the situation.

‘I believe I could, although I have not indulged in many puddings until lately. What is coming into this pie, by the by? Would it not be time to see about it?’

‘Scraps,’ was the laconic reply.

‘Very good things,’ said Mr. Dyson stoutly, feeling that he had been indiscreet, and in order to cover the situation added with a not quite successful attempt at jocularly, ‘and are you going to eat it all up yourself?’

‘No, of course my sisters will help me.’

Mr. Dyson was silent for a little.

‘Is it only in the eating that your sisters help you? Why not in the cooking too?’

‘Oh, they do, but they are busy with other things to-day.’

‘It seems to me that they might lend you a hand here,’ he said, with something of a feeling of resentment against the invisible sisters.

Philippa flushed anew. ‘They would if I asked them, but Adela is not strong, and Cissy is such a child; I am both the oldest and the strongest, so it is only natural that I should take all the hard work.’

Mr. Dyson did not see the force of the argument, but kept his thoughts to himself as he puzzled in silence over the curiously composed household into which he had stumbled unawares.

‘Do you live alone with your sisters?’ he asked at last abruptly, for beating about the bush was a thing not congenial to his nature.

‘Yes; we have lived so for nearly five years.’

'Then you must have begun as children,' he observed, looking at the youthful profile of his fellow-worker, now busy with cutting up the meat scraps.

'I suppose so, but I have not felt like a child really since mamma died. One of us had to be grown up, you know,' she added, with grave simplicity. 'It would not have done for us all to remain children.'

'And you have always worked as hard as this?'

'Not quite. It was quite bearable until about a year ago, and then—and then, well we got some money and lost it all again.' Philippa had pulled herself up abruptly. It was difficult to believe that she had said as much as this to a total stranger. If it had not been for the earnest attention in the black eyes which spoke so reassuringly, not of a vulgar curiosity but of a genuine fellow-feeling, she could never have been so open. She had checked herself now, or thought she had done so, but presently, under the influence of this earnest attention, she was, by many an inadvertent remark, of which she could not know that it was being carefully picked up and pieced on to its fellows, giving him more glimpses behind the scenes. She was aware only that her first embarrassment had completely vanished, and that after half an hour more nothing could appear more natural than to be making a pie in the company of her acquaintance of yesterday.

'It has only to be put into the oven now,' she said at last almost gleefully, 'and then to be eaten.' She broke off and looked at him in doubt. 'I should like to ask you to stop and taste it,' she added impulsively—'only there won't be enough of it for us all,' was what she had nearly said, but he spared her the words.

'If my mother was not waiting luncheon for me I should certainly claim my share,' he interrupted her, 'and I shall claim it yet, but not to-day.'

After that he went, with many thoughts in his head, and only to return in two days, ostensibly for Bobbin's sake, in reality because his interest in the investigation begun had sensibly increased. This time it was the front door he went in by, and it was Adela who, with a feather-brush in her hand, which she was rather disconsolately wielding, met him on the threshold. He knew the face at once although he had not known Philippa's; necessarily the features of the girl whose unconscious head, with face upturned, had rested on

his arm, had imprinted themselves more deeply on his memory than those of the sister who had needed no succour, and at whom he had scarcely had time to glance. The discovery only added to the puzzle. These sisters whom he had met first in court-dress and then in servants' aprons were difficult to range into any definite category. That they were ladies was as evident as that they were almost paupers, and the past season of prosperity as evident as the present distress.

Little by little, as Bobbin's leg slowly healed, the veil began to lift from the mystery ; for Bobbin's leg did not heal without much bandaging and many lotions, more, probably, than many a far better situated donkey enjoys under similar circumstances, and which necessitated almost daily visits of the amateur veterinary surgeon. By dint of bandaging, on one side, and investigating on the other, Mr. Dyson had within a few days become an intimate of Gilham, without stopping to reflect whether it was strictly correct to visit girls in this totally unprotected position. In the parts of the world he had lived in no one had had time to stickle at such nice shades of social propriety, and besides, the position was altogether too abnormal to be measured by conventional rules. So long as he was wanted he would come, and when he was no longer wanted—well, he supposed he would stay away, but could not conceal from himself that the cessation of these visits would leave a rather flat feeling behind. He was learning a lot about human nature in his intercourse with the head of the little republic, and human nature had always been his favourite study. Once having seen the inside of the house, he had begun to understand a good many things which had been dark to him before. On almost each visit some trivial circumstance gave him a deeper insight into the situation.

'You do not happen to know anybody who would like to have a dog?' asked Philippa one day, still early in their acquaintance.

'A dog? You cannot want to part with any of them, surely? I thought they were the delight of your life!'

'So they are ; but some delights come expensive. Lately it has occurred to me that it is rather ridiculous for three people to keep seven dogs ; it makes ten mouths to feed instead of three, you know, and then the tax comes to a good deal. I

really do wonder how it has never struck me before that it is simply wicked to keep them.'

After the meeting in the kitchen and the episode of the scrap pie, Philippa had felt it useless to keep up illusions before their new friend, and had therefore taken the part of admitting the truth with a certain proud simplicity which was far wiser than she herself knew. In theory it would have sounded awful to let a stranger in behind the scenes of their present life, in practice it was, somehow, not awful at all—at least with this particular sort of stranger who had evidently gone through most of the hardships that a man can go through, and tasted of a much worse distress than was the sisters' present lot. The discovery that their helper was the new owner of Swanmere, the millionaire of the neighbourhood, had indeed taken Philippa considerably aback, but her consternation had not endured. It was too evident that although rich he had not yet forgotten what it was to be poor. In another way, however, the discovery had been a disappointment, at least to Philippa, and this for a reason which she did not attempt to conceal from herself. The master of Swanmere, however good-naturedly inclined, necessarily belonged to a very different sphere from themselves, and would doubtless disappear out of their lives very shortly, claimed by other interests; and already Philippa felt that when he went he would take something from her that had only come into her life lately, although not yet quite aware of what the true name of this something was. Everything was going to be taken from her, she told herself in her moments of despondency—even the dogs; for after a hard mental struggle she had resolved that this last sacrifice should be made. Nothing, in fact, remained to be sacrificed, except the dogs, and now they must go—all but perhaps Ophelia—so as to squeeze out a little more nourishment for Adela, who had never quite regained her old strength. But the struggle had been hard, for if Gilham was dreary now, what would it be without these four-footed companions of exile?

'I have thought it all out,' she said to Mr. Dyson to-day, 'and really it is no kindness to keep them. Ophelia is the only one with whom a short diet agrees; she is ever so much friskier now that those folds hang loose about her neck than in London, when they were padded as tight as they could hold. But with the others it is quite the other way. Just look at Jabberwock's ribs almost coming through his skin! Please try and think of a kind home for him!'

'If you think my home kind enough I shall take Jabberwock back with me to-day.'

'Not to-day !' she said quickly. 'Cissy knows nothing yet, and it will hurt her fearfully. She must be prepared a little ; let her have him for one week longer !'

He looked at her curiously. "And will it hurt you less than your sister ?'

'Perhaps not ; but then, you see, I am getting hardened ; it has been my duty, of course, to take the worst blows.'

'I don't see how it can be your duty to take their share as well as your own,' said Mr. Dyson hotly, but she looked at him with such unaffected astonishment that he was silent.

'Are you sure you don't mind taking Jabberwock ?' she asked anxiously after a minute. 'You don't think him so very ugly, do you ?'

'I'll take the whole lot of them,' was the cheerful reply, 'if only you will trust them to me—and if only we can come to terms,' he added, after a scarcely perceptible moment of hesitation.

'About what ?'

"About the price, of course," he said lightly, but preferring not to look at her.

'The price ?' All the blood rushed suddenly to Philippa's face. 'You thought I meant to sell them to you ?'

'I certainly never imagined that you meant to make me a present of six dogs,' said Mr. Dyson, aware by the tone of her voice that in his over-great desire to help he had done an unpardonable thing. 'I really don't see how I can accept—'

'Then you sha'n't have them !' cried Philippa, facing him with blazing eyes. 'You thought, you really thought that I was manœuvring for this ? For money ? No ; I can't take money from you—I can't !'

She did not know how vehemently she had said it until she met his astonished gaze. This woman with the quivering nostrils and disdainful lips, so contemptuously spurning the mere idea of a gain which he yet knew to be of almost vital importance to her, could she actually be the same as the answerer of that ridiculous advertisement ? The question was in his mind as he contemplated her passionately disturbed face. The doubt which, since the beginning of their acquaintance, had more than once obtruded itself, stirred again now. Perhaps, after all, there was a mistake somewhere ; might not

the photograph be as much a fraud as the advertisement itself had been ?

'You knew that we are poor,' Philippa was saying, still in that agitated voice, 'and therefore you thought that we must also be beggars.'

'Miss Venning,' he quietly interrupted her, 'would you do me a favour ? It is merely to take a piece of paper and write down the five names of the dogs—or is it six ?—in case I forget them before next week. If I am to have them gratis so much the better for me ; Swanmere is in great need of watchdogs, as it is. You know perfectly well that I had nothing bad in my thoughts when I supposed you meant to sell them. I think it is a great extravagance to give them away, for some of them are very fairly bred, but you shall have your way. Here is a piece of paper that will do.'

The request was so unexpected and the manner so quietly authoritative that the effect was suddenly to cool Philippa's abrupt excitement, and to make her feel all at once ashamed of what now appeared in the light of 'a merely childish outbreak. Once more succumbing to his will, she took the sheet of paper which he had pushed towards her, and silently sat down at the writing-table, beside which they had been standing during the last few minutes. It was a little astonishing that Mr. Dyson should take so deep an interest in the dogs' names, and should stand beside her, looking on with such obvious attention while she put them to paper, but she did not stop now to reflect upon this circumstance.

Five minutes later, with the sheet in his pocket, he had taken his leave somewhat abruptly, and, once at home, went straight back to a certain drawer in his writing-table.

'Yes, it is her !' he said aloud in the solitude of the smoking-room, having carefully compared the list he held with the handwriting of that one laconic letter. 'It is her, after all !'

He had ceased to doubt, and he had begun almost to understand, for he knew that there are different sorts of madness, and that the madness of self-sacrifice, although uncommon, is not an unknown form.

'Those sisters ! those sisters !' he said to himself as he pensively refolded the sheet ; 'they have much to answer for indeed, and by their mere existence !'

(To be concluded.)

WOMEN OF OTHER NATIONS.

V.—SWEDEN.

IN old days, whoever injured, defamed, or killed a woman at the head of a family in Sweden, was awarded a heavier punishment than for the same offence committed against a man—a law without counterpart in any other country. Swedish men have always been particularly distinguished for chivalry towards women, and this characteristic is upheld by their sympathetic attitude towards their claims in all relations of life.

Perhaps there is no country in the world where such a thorough and comprehensive system of education is open to all women of every class.

The primary schools, of which there are about 8,000, including infant schools, under the superintendence of the State, provide a good, sensible education free, and which is compulsory up to the age of twelve years. Co-education of boys and girls is frequent, and on the increase. Writing, arithmetic, Bible history, a good knowledge of their own language, and church singing are taught, and, in addition, history, geometrical drawing, and natural history, and, sometimes, some kinds of manual work. Then in all the towns come High Schools, which are largely attended by farmers' daughters, tradespeople, and peasants of a superior character. Besides history and literature, these teach chemistry and hygiene, cooking, laundry, and needlework. Women in Sweden often take charge of the dairy cattle, as well as of the dairy itself, and there are special schools in Sweden which train for this. Technical schools abound in which knowledge of all technical trades in which women can engage may be acquired: wood-carving, metal-engraving, bookbinding, &c. Slöjd schools for manual work, dancing-schools, cookery and housekeeping schools, where, besides the ordinary branches, marketing, domestic economy, and the hygiene of food are taught. Stockholm has opened institutions for training maidservants. Everywhere

there are Sunday schools ; and mending classes, in which poor children are taught to repair their clothes, are scattered thickly over the country, and are generally in charge of young ladies.

Children in all classes are now mostly educated in day schools, of which many excellent ones are to be found in every town ; only in some aristocratic families, especially in the castles and manors of the country, governesses are kept, but in Stockholm even the daughters of the nobility are quite as frequently sent to school as educated at home. When there is a governess she is, as a rule, quite one of the family, but the children are less under her eye than that of their mother. As a rule the Swedish woman stands very high in education ; few girls learn Latin, because it is not the foundation of their own tongue, but she will learn to speak, read, and write three or four modern languages besides her own, besides geometry, ancient and modern history, and Swedish history, to which great attention is paid. The course of study is a hard one ; the subjects taken up are thoroughly mastered, and the parents often visit the schools to find out how the children are getting on. There are seven classes to go through before the universities can be entered. Since 1870, women have been allowed to matriculate at these, and since 1873 to take the same academic degrees as men in art and medicine. They may not accept State employment in medicine, and the theological faculty is not open to them. They study law, though, without at present attempting to practise, and are eligible for professorships, that of the higher mathematics being held for years by the Russian mathematician, Sofia Kovalevsky ; and a Swede, Elsa Eschelon, who has passed the highest legal examination that exists, and one to which men seldom aspire, is a lecturer to classes of male students ; and another lady, Ellen Fries, is a doctor of philosophy. Education is not confined to the schools or to lesson hours. There are no end of instructions about good manners. Children *must* speak French easily and readily. The little bob-courtesy, taught to girls as soon as they can toddle, is the fashion among older folk everywhere in the country, and among old-fashioned people in Stockholm. 'It is very pretty,' says a charming writer, Mrs. Baker, 'to see little children courtesy to their mother's friends as they pass them in the street. They make no halt, but slightly bend the knee as they go, like a sail-boat going down with a little wave, and then up in a second, keeping on its course all the time.'

However great the hurry to get off to school, the children must always kiss their parents and thank them for their meal before starting. The Swedish lady likes to keep her house, her home well in her own hands, and to be its ruling and guiding power. She is an excellent house-mother in every rank of life : you see a graceful, dignified lady, living in a charming flat, kept at a soft, warm temperature all through the winter, with polished floors, groups of plants, and plenty of books, and you learn that she looks vigilantly after her five or six children, sees them off to school early in the morning, and is always ready to welcome and listen to them on their return.

On Sunday people go to church in the morning, and the daughters take Sunday-school classes. Religion is not an affair of much discussion, but there exists a great deal, simple and unobtrusive. On a summer afternoon all Stockholm streams out of the city, and those who cannot leave flock to the public parks. In winter, parties start sleighing and tobogganing, and after four o'clock the houses are gay with family gatherings, for it is a great day for weekly visits among relatives, and all the married members bring their children to their parents' houses. There are concerts of sacred music and good singing to be attended, and hymn-singing and Bible-reading in many homes.

In all parts of Sweden you find the quiet, old-fashioned homes and country houses where generation after generation has lived and died, where old family customs and traditions are still observed, where the master will take an axe or a rake with his men, or help to shovel away the snow in the avenue, and where the mistress is looked on as a saint and the good influence of all ; where visitors are hospitably welcomed, and where a well-filled library supplies material for reading aloud on winter evenings : such a home as children who go out into the world can look back to with love and longing, and to which they return to lay their honours at their mother's feet. There is much pleasant, refined home life to be found in many country houses, and there are many mistresses who manage their children and servants admirably, look after their tenants kindly, and are charming companions to their husbands, and bright and graceful in society. In winter the country houses are warm and cheerful, gay with sleighing parties and festivals. Christmas is a time for presents, cakes and feasting, in which the servants and poorer neighbours share. Country

ladies are good, economical housewives. Brewing and baking are done at home, and superintended by the ladies of the household. In some homes the loom is still used : carpeting is made, and homespun to be worn by the maids and children. In old-fashioned homes babies are still swaddled in strong bandages, and spend their days in their perambulators wheeled from room to room.

When a young girl is confirmed she wears her first long black dress, and after the ceremony a dinner is given to relatives and intimate friends, and after receiving the Holy Communion on the following Sunday, which is made as impressive an occasion as possible, she is considered a grown-up young lady, and her schooldays are over, though she still goes to classes and lectures. When the winter season begins a mother takes her *débutante* daughter to call upon all her circle of acquaintance and to be presented to them, and the calls are punctiliously returned by card-leaving on the girl. Swedish girls are often very pretty, even beautiful, with fair skins, bright hair, and tall, straight figures. Young men and women meet at balls, skating in winter, on the tennis grounds and promenades in summer. There is little calling, and no gentleman joins a young lady in the street or walks with her. At evening parties the girls are generally gathered in one room, looking very pretty and saying very little. Though they go about very independently, they have a chaperon with them at all indoor parties, and their manners with men is sweet and natural, but a little shy and reserved.

The Swedes used to be very fond of dancing, but for some years balls have been out of favour as compared with dinner parties. An accusation is brought against them by more than one of their cultured and travelled countrywomen that both men and women are great *gourmands*, that even the young care unduly about eating, and that dinners have the first place in the ranks of pleasure. The ordinary family dinner is simple enough, but when guests are present it assumes alarming proportions. Every Swedish housewife is ambitious where her kitchen is concerned. Great dinners are given in the towns, in the castles of the aristocracy, by the military and civil officials, and the *bourgeoisie* imitate this display as well as they can. These feasts begin at four, five, or six o'clock, and there are numerous courses, and nine or ten kinds of wine. The season in Stockholm begins in January, when Parliament

opens, and lasts till May. Life in society then is very brilliant and animated. Swedish people love fun and pleasure. You see ladies of all ranks with their friends and husbands making parties at the open-air restaurants and variety theatres. Some great balls are given in the season, and lately a movement is going on for introducing old national dances, performed in costume into society, and this seems to have brought new life into the slackening attractions of the ball-room. A society calling itself Philochosos has devoted itself to finding out old dances and tunes. It consists of young men who invite to their gatherings young ladies who have privately done their part in learning steps and figures. Some married ladies act as chaperons, and the performance of these dances, all danced in national costume, and some of which are very pretty, is a great amusement. Almost every lady plays and sings and sometimes very well, but it is unlucky that every girl thinks it *necessary* to play, whether she has taste or not, and in thin-built houses the ears of the rest of the world are tortured by her attempts. Women and young girls go in now for gymnastics and many outdoor sports. Bicycling and lawn tennis, walking tours, and, in the winter, skating, tobogganing, and even snow-shoeing. Etiquette in society is strictly observed; when calling you do not sit down even if shown into an empty room till your hostess arrives and indicates where you are to place yourself. When supper is served, all wait for her to give a sign to whoever is to go forward first to help herself. The *hors d'œuvres* are eaten standing, and then you are invited to place yourself at one of the little tables. There is much clinking of glasses, health-drinking, and many pretty speeches. You must not forget to take your host and hostess by the hand on leaving the table and thank them for the pleasant meal. A lady must not be the first to bow to a gentleman in the street, and, walking with a person older or more distinguished than herself, must be careful to keep on the left hand. When an engagement of marriage takes place presents pour in upon the young couple, who may then go about together and plan and arrange their new home.

The Swedish lady has not the smartness or *chic* of the French or even of the English. She likes to dress well, and sometimes handsomely, but she has not much *vraie génie*. She often takes her fashions from England nowadays, and admires the tailor-made style : a few years ago all fashions came from

France. She dresses simply, and when not in company seldom wears even *demie-toilette*. In the southern provinces, which are the richest, life on the manors is much like that of county magnates in England, though in some ways it may still have a little more simplicity.

Swedish servants have been pronounced to be nearly perfect. They are engaged by the year or half-year at about half the wages of an English servant. They take a real pride in their work, for which they are well trained, and are devoted to the honour and interest of the family they serve. Every Swedish maidservant possesses a large walnut bureau, which is wheeled from house to house when she changes her situation. The household servant or servants are generally assisted by a help-madame, who comes in to brush clothes and black boots at a marvellously small charge. In many families the maids are allowed to sew for themselves on one day in the week when all the absolutely necessary work has been done, and are also given the same privilege from Christmas to the 6th or 13th of January. Washing-day comes only quarterly or even half-yearly, so that a large stock of linen is a necessary possession for every one, including the servant. Old servants are well looked after, pensioned or placed in some institution and kindly cared for.

The division between classes is less marked than it formerly was. The nobility is, however, still very exclusive. Wealth begins to make its special display, but many people enjoy both these privileges without being upset by them. Professions do not, so far, carry with them any social consideration; loss of caste on entering any of them depends on the individual herself.

On all sides a tendency to work is making itself apparent among educated women which was not known thirty years ago. It is no longer the rule for the daughters of a family to stay quietly at home, helping in the house and thinking of balls, dresses, and lovers. It is now customary for them to try to get something to do, in order to secure an independent profession. This inclination is apt to go too far nowadays, and discomfort and neglect of family ties is often complained of. A great desire exists, amounting to a passion, to emulate man in every profession, but in the higher ones examples of feminine success, though not absent, are limited in number. The chief profession, and most highly thought of, is that of teaching.

Many girls are employed at the various High Schools and colleges ; some of them of the highest social position. Sweden does not acknowledge as doctors any but those who have passed the highest examinations. Girls of all classes are earning their living and going into professions often for pure love of work. The daughter of one of the chief ministers of State has a situation in a bank. The nursing department is very advanced in Sweden. The first training institute was organised at Upsala in 1867 under a lady trained at St. Thomas's Hospital, London. There are now excellent training departments in the hospitals, and nurses are sent out. They are generally persons of education and refinement, not seldom of noble family. They are delightfully simple and helpful, warm and friendly in manner, and thoroughly efficient and trustworthy. At the Deaconesses Institute in Stockholm all attendance on the patients is performed by the ladies of the order with the assistance of physicians, and much of the medicine is prepared. The Institute also maintains a school for destitute children, a reformatory for women and one for girls, and a school for training servant-girls.

The practice of midwifery is only allowed legally after a proper training, and to this may be attributed the slight mortality in childbirth. Nearly 3,000 women are practising as certificated midwives. The post-office, telegraph, and telephone offices abound with women. In the case of post-mistresses and superior clerks they receive the same wages as men. They are employed in the Bureau of Statistics, as designers in the Archives of Maps, and exclusively in the Savings Bank. Many thousands are in business on their own account, and over a thousand are owners of factories and workshops. They have founded several independent businesses, such as the advertisement and copying offices. Much of the Government and lawyers' copying is done by women, and also of old MSS. in the archives. Women edit papers, and are also employed as newspaper critics and reporters. They are amongst the best photographers. Xylography, lithography, and engraving afford employment to many female artists, and almost all the large shops have female cashiers. In trades and industries there are watchmakers, two sisters in Stockholm are goldsmiths. Printing offices are owned and managed by women, and there are few trades in which some are not engaged on their own account.

The Swedish language is so little studied by foreigners that the many good novelists remain unknown out of their own country, but some of these take a decided line, are very modern in their views, and excite much enthusiasm on the one hand and censure on the other. Perhaps singing is the art in which Swedes most excel. They have high, clear voices, and not every country can boast of a Jenny Lind, a Christine Nilsson, and a Sigrid Arnoldson. All the ancient kinds of beautiful needlework, weaving, and embroidery, for which the ladies of Sweden were famed in the Middle Ages, have been reproduced, and the most elaborate and artistic designs are carried out.

Sweden has a more lively and general interest in the subject of women's rights than any other country of the north. Both the State and private individuals are ready to employ women, and some of the most influential men in the country have shown themselves eager to raise the status of the female education.

Miss Bremer was perhaps the earliest and foremost to labour for the emancipation of her countrywomen, working to secure them the right of studying in the best schools, and the progress in the direction she strove for has been full and effectual. Among societies started by women to be of service to their own sex, the Frederika Bremer Institute is the chief. It finds work for women as teachers and translators, it gives advice on home studies, and encourages the distribution of good reading. It provides scholarships for students, organises lectures, and supplies the country population with trained nurses. It was founded by Baroness Sofi Adlersparre, a great promoter of women's rights. It is largely due to this lady's perseverance that many of the schools belonging to the splendid system in Scandinavia have been founded or thrown open to women. Her paper, the *Home Review*, exerts an influence in women's favour throughout the country. Baroness Adlersparre died some years ago, but Scandinavian women will not forget her.

The C.O.S. is in full force in Stockholm; ladies in society give much time to it and make energetic and sensible efforts to raise the poor to a higher level. One lady of noble family lives in a lodging-house for the poor, where single rooms are let at moderate prices. In the free industrial schools, ladies, old and young, give their services on winter evenings to teach handicrafts to poor children. Several are appointed on School Boards and some have become Guardians of the Poor. In the

poor-houses each old woman has her own comfortable chair, her little table, with books and plants.

It would take long to enumerate all the philanthropic societies. The Governesses Mutual Annuity Fund ; a sale-room called the Beehive, to dispose of the work of reduced gentlewomen, which has been a great financial success in Stockholm, and has been imitated in several provincial towns. There are societies which distribute employment in spinning, weaving, and knitting among the very poor ; Friends of Poor Children ; a Thrift Society, originated by Queen Louise ; a Home for Released Female Prisoners, established by the present Queen ; the Crown Princess's Hospital for Children, Rescue Homes, Homes for elderly ladies and maidservants and incurables—all owing their origin to the exertions of women, some of Royal birth and some of modest means. The Young Women's Christian Association has taken a hold on the country. It has now forty-four branches in the country, and one little town alone has 200 members. The Queen takes the deepest interest in philanthropic societies and benevolent works. Prayer-meetings are constantly held at the palace on the arrival of any foreign evangelist of special gifts. Women may vote in municipal elections for the parish clergy and the municipal councillors, and also have a voice in naming the electors of the Upper Council which elects the members of the Upper Chamber.

The father of the present king in 1845 promulgated the law of equal inheritance for men and women ; this is a revival of an old law of the twelfth century. As soon as the marriage ceremony is performed, the property of husband and wife is united and each party has an equal share, with the exception of landed property. A married woman has control of her dowry, though she cannot part with land without her husband's consent. A society exists for protecting married women's private property, so that it cannot be alienated to pay her husband's debts or lost by his maladministration. In 1846 women were granted the right to practise industrial professions and carry on business in their own name. In 1853 they were allowed to become teachers in private schools, in 1863 declared of age at twenty-five, and in 1872 given the right to contract a marriage without the consent of any male relation, though it was not till 1880 that the nobility yielded the privilege of controlling their daughters in this matter.

The Swedish peasants are hard working, but they keep many festivals, and love dancing and merriment. In the short, beautiful summer they seem hardly to need any sleep, but stay out of doors as much as possible. All the Swedes love nature. The girls love to sit two or three in the woods with their work and to come back with their hands filled with wild flowers. Whole family parties are to be seen on summer evenings, sitting out on the grassy terraces, chatting and singing Volkslieder. They are passionately fond of flowers, and the florists' shops are full of them all through the winter. Everybody who can possibly do so gets into the country in June, July, and August, and Midsummer Day is a festival kept with great rejoicings in every class; whole families—fathers, mothers, children, and grandparents—are to be seen dancing hand in hand round the gaily decked maypoles.

An exclusive linen industry flourishes in the north. Hand-made linen is a great article of commerce, and the women travel for long distances to dispose of their wares. All kinds of knitting and lace-making and basket-making are flourishing home industries. A great number of girls are employed in match factories, and their condition is reported to be much better than in our country, though Swedish matches are so cheap. Working-class women profit by the excellent education open to them, and they attend a great many lectures on all sorts of subjects.

The woman of Scandinavia has a great deal of self-respect of the kind which leads other people to respect her. She is usually extremely conscientious. She has been called cold and undemonstrative in manner, but is rather reserved, serious, and gentle, faithful in friendship and in love, modest, retiring, even when, as is often the case, highly cultured, romantic, though with plenty of common sense. A past of superstition lends something to her tone of thought, and perhaps this is partly why spiritualism has obtained so decided a footing.

A recent author has attacked the *bourgeoisie* for its commercial self-satisfaction, its mania for conventionalities, its small mind, and starved nature, but this is partly true of every country. In the provincial towns especially there is often an atmosphere of prying into other people's business, an undue attention to trifles that is sometimes oppressive to those who want to shake themselves free from petty trammels.

In Sweden, says the same mentor, women have lately begun

to cogitate on their own importance. The air is filled with an incredible number of women's works : an incredible amount of female talent has been discovered. Everything concerning women is discussed and debated with some loss to young girls of their natural simplicity and unconstraint. 'Björnson is the evangelist of the feminine middle class. The hearts of all discontented women are laid at his feet. He teaches that self-education, the joys of students, are more natural to women than the artificial, overrated fiction of love. Women teachers and bookkeepers who, knapsacks on backs, wander across the mountains of their native land carry his name upon their lips and his books in their hearts.'

There may be some truth in this reading, and as much in that of a Norwegian writer, who says of the women of Sweden : 'She has chosen the right means to attain her end. She goes forward, calm and strong, diligent, earnest, and gentle, showing of what she is capable and to what she means to attain. She resembles her own land—soft and rich. She works cautiously and surely, and in good time she reaches her goal.'

EVELYN MARCH PHILLIPPS.

THE STORY OF HERVÉ: BRETON SAINT AND SINGER.

I.

PROMINENT among quaint legends of saints little known outside their local district stands that of the blind saint Hervé, patron of all Breton bards. His story has come down to us fairly completely through his fellow-countryman, Albert le Grand, and in the folk-songs of his native Brittany, clothed with much that is legendary and fantastic, we find the chief events of his life truthfully given.

We may trace throughout much that is of historical value ; for we cannot over-estimate the important effect on literature of these monastic singers, the forerunners of all true poetry, who influenced so largely the greater singers that succeeded them.

To understand something of the times of our saint, we must go back to the barbaric courts of the Merovingian kings in the sixth century. The independent province of Armorica had been compelled to become tributary to the all-powerful Clovis, at whose death, in the division of his kingdom between his four sons, it fell, together with Paris and its neighbourhood, to the share of Childebert. This wild chieftain, after the manner of the Frankish kings, encouraged at his table singers of all nations who would entertain him and his guests with their verse and music. Though harsh and unmusical of voice, the Bretons would probably be excelled by none in the poetic talent for improvising, that was so natural to the Celtic nature ; and they thus maintained a prominent position among minstrels throughout the country.

One in particular, who had grown up at the court of Childebert, was singled out for special favour—the young Hyvarnion—whose very name, signifying ‘the little *savant*,’ marked his

superiority over the barbarians with whom he mixed. Amidst all the wild debauches of these lawless times, when the morals of Druidism and Christianity strove together in deadly struggle, he lived pure in word and deed, devoting himself to the composition of verse and accompanying music, for both of which he could draw on his rare powers of imagination. No presents nor promises from an indulgent master could tempt him to relinquish the idea of returning to his native country ; so that Childebert at last reluctantly parted from his youthful favourite, sending him away laden with gifts and a special recommendation to the *Kon-mor*, his representative in the government of Armorica.

It was while staying at the court of this Frank that Hyvarnion dreamed the three dreams by which his future was determined. In the first and second he saw a beautiful young orphan of Léon sitting by a fountain singing in a wondrous sweet voice. He was much troubled by this apparition, and prayed for deliverance from the phantom, only to dream the third night of a man surrounded with light, saying, 'Fear not to take her whom thou sawest, she is pure as thyself, and thy love will be blessed.'

The Frankish chief to whom these visions were related took upon himself to ensure their realisation, and arranged a hunting-party, during which Hyvarnion met in a wood the maiden of his dreams. Singing with an angelic voice, she was gathering simples by a stream, 'with robe so white and face so rosy that she seemed a wild rose blossoming in the snow.'

'What flowers gatherest thou, fair queen of the fountain ?'

'I seek not flowers, sir, but precious herbs—one to heal sadness, another blindness, and a third, could I but find it, to conquer death itself.'

'Give unto me the first, I beseech thee,' cried the young man.

But the maiden refused, saying—

'Pardon, my lord, but only to him whom I shall wed may I give it.'

'Then do I claim it, for to that purpose am I come !'

And he received the herb of happiness from the hand of his bride.

Thus is told the wooing of the beautiful Rivanone, and the marriage was celebrated at the court of the Frank with all the extravagant rejoicing of the times. The legend enumerates lengthily the number of boars, bulls, buffaloes, and kids that

were sacrificed ; the priests receiving one hundred white robes, the warriors one hundred golden collars, the women countless blue mantles, and the poor a hundred new garments. To crown all, a hundred musicians joined voice and lyre to the festivities, which lasted a whole fortnight.

II.

Three years later a son was born to the singers, and because he was blind they called him *Huerv*, the Breton name for Amertume or Bitterness. But Hyvarnion never saw his son grow up, for not many months later death took him, and sorrow and poverty came to the once happy home.

Our introduction to Hervé is on one All Saints' Day at his mother's bed of sickness, when he speaks thus—

'If thou lovest me, mother mine, let me now find my way to the church, whither, though seven years old, I have never yet gone.'

'Alas ! dear child, how shall I take thee when here in this sore illness I am compelled to beg for bread ?'

'Beg for bread, my mother, shalt thou never ; that will I do for thee through the songs which I will sing to touch the hearts of the people.'

And the blind boy, accompanied only by his white dog, walked bravely barefoot through the wind and the rain, singing his mother's poems though his teeth chattered with the cold. According to the Breton custom on this night of the year, he knelt also with the other mourners at his father's grave, to mingle his voice with those of the wandering souls. So worn out was the child on his way home that his weary feet failed him, and he slipped in the frozen rain, falling so heavily that several of his teeth were broken, but in falling turned to glittering diamonds—a foreshadowing of his songs that were soon to illumine the darkness of a pagan world.

Tradition follows Hervé through a crowd of cruel children who stopped their play to mock at the blind boy. On the solemn curse pronounced upon them by him, they were each turned into a dwarf and doomed to dance on for ever, which they do to this day, feared and hated by all true Bretons. Another curse fell on the rough granite of his native Léon, which cut his bare feet, and the ground was rendered

'so hard that neither iron nor steel could stir it'—an allusion doubtless to the hard barbaric nature of its inhabitants.

After eight years Hervé once more asked his mother for permission to leave her; this time for ever, in order to devote himself to the service of God in the solitude of the woods. Rivanone, in accordance with the spirit of the times, encouraged her son in his pious desire, putting him under the care of his Uncle Gourfoed, who kept in a forest a Christian school for the youth of Brittany, while she retired to a band of holy women who tended the poor and suffering. The legend describes Hervé in quest of his uncle, 'guided by his white dog barking joyously, doves singing along his path, the sun surrounding his head with a crown of light.'

Here he lived and learned happily for many years, giving his time chiefly to the study of music and poetry, for which he had so remarkable a talent. Once only during this time did he see his mother, till called to her holy death-bed by a vision of a ladder leading from his oratory up to heaven, whereon angels came and went singing sweetly, awaiting Rivanone to join her voice to theirs.

III.

After the death of his mother Hervé was made head of the school in the wood on the retirement of his uncle. The renown of the saint had by this time gone throughout the country; so that not only children from the neighbourhood crowded round him daily, but also pious men from afar off, who in order to work and pray under his direction built their huts round about him, soon forming a complete colony. Taking poetry and music as the foundation of all his teaching, he inculcated not only discipline and all the Christian virtues, but gave great prominence to the cultivation of the memory by making his pupils learn canticles and maxims in verse. It is unfortunately difficult to distinguish the master-hand among the many sayings attributed to him and his disciples. Villemarqué can only give three fragments, preserved by the Bretons as being authentically those of St. Hervé.

1. 'It is better to instruct a child than to heap up for him riches.'

2. 'The idle child hoards an old age of misery.'

3. 'He who disobeys the helm will obey the reef.'

Various popular Breton songs and sayings are ascribed to the saint, chiefly, however, bearing the mark of later times, and it is probable that at the most only a few words are really his. All, however, are true to his character of wise man and gentle teacher of humility and benevolence.

In common with all primitive poets, Hervé's life abounds in legends illustrating his power over the beasts, once lost in the garden of Eden, and only to be recovered by extreme holiness. A fox who dared to steal the saint's hen was forced to bring it back unhurt in his mouth. The wolf who devoured his donkey was compelled to follow him for the rest of his life like a spaniel, as is shown in several bas-reliefs, and to this day Breton nurses hold up 'St. Hervé's spaniel' as a bogey to their young charges.

In the midst of his prosperity, though sought after by all, Hervé remained the same simple nature; and when his popularity became burdensome retired further into the wood in search of his old master Gourfoed. Grasses and ferns hid the path leading to the hermitage, and he was beginning to despair when he came suddenly upon a clearing, where a huge moss-covered stone was supported by four smaller ones, surrounded by the ruins of a hut. The saint feeling that here was what he sought, fell on his knees crying loudly on the rock to cleave itself and the earth to open, whereupon the ground trembled, the rock was rent and the tomb of his uncle disclosed.

IV.

Our next glimpse of Hervé is in his old age. Tired of wandering about homeless, he and his devoted followers prayed for a resting-place to be revealed to them, and were told by God not to stay their travels till He bid them rest. Journeying on in all faith, they were at last stopped in the midst of a field of green corn by a voice from the clouds. Here they built their little monastery, storing the corn which they were obliged to demolish, and returning it at harvest time to the owner of the field ripe and dry, each ear having in the meantime become two. Having completed this modest retreat, Hervé now set his heart on the erection of a Christian church. To effect this he tramped far and wide, soliciting aid from the rich and powerful, penetrating, it is said, even into Cornwall

on his fruitless quest, for everywhere he found the Armoricans little disposed to sacrifice for building materials any of the fine trees for which their country was famous.

To this period of trial and disappointment belong the struggles of the holy man with the Evil One, who appeared to tempt him in various forms, but always fled from him worsted. At this time also we hear of the frogs who interrupted his singing at a banquet by their rude voices, and one of whom in punishment was doomed to croak on for ever after. Villemarqué suggests that this legend of the frogs may have a deeper meaning, referring to the ancient Druid hymn of the bards known as the '*Vêpres des Grenouilles*,' to which Hervé and his pupils gave the deathblow.

Finally, after years of labour, the saint was able to raise his hymns in the church built by his zeal and energy, and his chronicler mentions that, not content with being the architect, Hervé acted also as master-builder and overseer of all the workmen. Concerning the church little has come down to us, except that it was supported on pillars of polished wood, and the altar was of three huge stones. Its whereabouts are unknown. He gave the charge of the interior to Kristina, a beautiful girl educated by Rivanone, who since the death of her teacher had attached herself to Hervé as his child. The legend gives a pretty picture of the maiden mixing gaily with the monks 'as a white dove amidst crows,' leading by hand the tamed wolf; and later, when the little colony had settled down, we find her established by the church in a broom-covered cottage shaded by willows. The parental love of St. Hervé for this child is a feature of his last days, and we hear of him listening with a father's pride for the sound of her voice as she gathered the flowers for the altar or brought home the snow-white church linen, singing sweetly his mother's hymns.

The last public act of this busy life was one of considerable importance and benefit in the history of the country. The *Kon-Mor* then reigning over Brittany had disgraced his rule by a series of cruelties and abominations. The Bretons, unable to withstand him, sought the help of their chief bishop, Samson, in accomplishing his downfall. Samson, touched by their wrongs and determinations, decided to employ against the tyrant the then all-powerful weapon of excommunication. Accordingly, all the Armorican bishops and wise men, includ-

ing Hervé, were bidden to a grand synod for the purpose, the place chosen being the *Run-Bré*, in the very heart of the offender's territory. When Hervé appeared at this august assembly the court prelate could not disguise a smile of derision as the old man came up, blind and barefoot, clad only in his goat-skin. Hervé remarked gently in return—

'Brother, reproach me not with my infirmity, for God might be pleased to afflict thee in a like manner.'

And immediately the bishop fell to the ground blind and bleeding.

The saint, however, showed further the nobility of his nature by healing his tormentor, rubbing his eyes with salt and water, and endowing him in addition to the gift of sight with 'the spirit of understanding.'

Then came the solemn moment for which they were gathered together. Standing on a wild crag, a holy candle in his hand, and surrounded by nine bishops, Hervé stood, pouring forth in the name of all of them the wrath of the Church in the cause of civil and religious justice. The speech in its awful significance has been handed down word for word, and at the close the bishops repeated three times, 'Amen,' trampling on their torches, emblem of the downtrodden foe.

And now we come to the last days of the life of our saint, for Hervé only lived to see the dawn of the reformed government which he had helped to bring about. Shortly before his death, feeling his end draw near, he retired to his church to fast and pray, and there, while in company with his friend, the bishop of Léon, appeared to him his vision of heaven opened and revealed to him. At this glorious sight he broke into his last words of song, and the canticle, preserved to posterity by the bishops, comes down to us through modern French thus—

'Behold ! I see before me heaven, my fatherland.

'Oh, that I might thither fly as the white dove.

'The gates of Paradise open, holy men and women come forth to greet me.

'God the Holy Father is there, His Blessed Son and Spirit.

'The fair and Holy Virgin, with a crown of twelve stars.

'And behold each bears a harp, angels and archangels praise God in singing.

'Virgins of all ages, saints from out all ranks, wives and widows crowned by God.

'My father and mother in shining glory, my brethren and countrymen.

'Choirs of rosy cherubs on the wing encircle their heads as a swarm of bees in a field of flowers, full of scent and song.

'Oh, happiness unheard of, which to contemplate is to desire.'

Three days later Hervé commanded Kristina to make him a bed of cinders 'on the ground near the altar, at the feet of Christ.' Yet another three days he lingered, while priests and holy men thronged to do honour to the dying saint, till his spirit at last departed in the month of June, 565, Kristina surviving him but a few moments.

The only relic now existing of the sweet Breton singer may be seen preserved in a country church of Lower Brittany—a small oak cradle, ancient and crumbling, believed to have been without doubt the bed of the infant saint Hervé. To wandering minstrels of all time there is supposed to be special efficacy in the mere touch of the sacred wood, which will send a sad pilgrim on his way rejoicing.

C. M. J.

A FORGOTTEN QUEEN.

BY M. F. W., AUTHOR OF 'A SUFFOLK IDYLL,' 'IN AN OLD GARDEN,' 'THE ROMANCE OF A STORE,' ETC.

THIS is an age of queens. In Spain, in Holland, and, best of all, in 'our own dear land,' we are reminded that a woman's sway can be, and is, one of the greatest blessings which Heaven vouchsafes to man. And, perhaps, it is not an inappropriate time to recall some memories of one who, in the latter part of the fifteenth century, had the proud distinction paid her that she 'ruled the world.'

For us, in particular, Isabella of Castile must always possess a special interest from the fact of her descent—both on the father's and mother's side—from the famous John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.

At her birth on April 22, 1451, at Madrigal, there did not seem to be the slightest prospect of her succeeding to the throne she afterwards filled with so much ability. Her father's reign is distinguished as being one of the longest and most disastrous in the annals of Castile. Though extending over forty-eight years, it may be called more properly one protracted minority, so much was he governed by his nobles and favourites. His only talents lay in a literary line; and his fondness for books and making verses certainly encouraged and promoted learning in Castile. Happy had it been for his people if strength of character had been united to these gentler arts. His second wife, Isabella of Portugal, whom he married to please his minister, Alvaro de Luna, was the mother of our heroine. She seems to have been a person of some character and determination, for her first act was to compass the death of the favourite who had raised her to power for his own ends. Later on, we find her energies directed into gentler and more useful channels. From earliest days it would appear that she exercised a beneficial influence over the little daughter whose

name was to be remembered long after her own lay buried in the dust of oblivion. On the death of her husband in 1454, she retired to Avevalo with her two children, Isabella barely four years old, and Alfonso an infant. Here the little princess was brought up in seclusion, carefully trained and imbued with that deep reverence for religion which characterised her later years. Isabella seems to have fully appreciated her mother's care, and returned her affection ; for one of the first articles in her marriage treaty with Ferdinand enjoins him to 'Cherish and treat her mother with all reverence, and to provide suitably for her royal maintenance.'

In after years also we learn that she watched over her declining years with tender, filial devotion.

From an early age Isabella seems to have possessed a strong will of her own. Her half-brother, Henry IV., who had succeeded to the throne of Castile at his father's death, was a weak, licentious prince, ready to sacrifice family, friends, anything to the selfish impulse of the moment. When Isabella was only thirteen he promised her hand to Alfonso of Portugal. To this, however, the young princess stoutly objected, owing to the disparity of their years—neither threats nor entreaties having any effect upon her. With wisdom beyond her years she urged that 'the infantas of Castile could not be disposed of in marriage without the consent of the nobles of the realm.' Previously to this her hand had been sought for the very Ferdinand whom she afterwards married, and she had been actually betrothed to his elder brother Carlos, whose death alone prevented the union.

But though once baffled Henry was by no means conquered. He had only one daughter, Joanna, about the legitimacy of whose birth there was some question ; therefore Isabella's near connection with the crown made it doubly important that her marriage should not be in any way opposed to the interests of this daughter. To ensure this, he removed his sister and her young brother to his own court ; and thus, at the age of sixteen, Isabella was taken from the shelter of her mother's retirement into the full glare and wickedness of a court whose levity was scarcely even covered by the veil of hypocrisy. But the early lessons were too deeply seated to be easily shaken, and these, combined with her own strength of character, enabled her then and henceforth to lead a life of blameless purity.

It was much needed in dealing with a character like Henry's.

Having alienated his nobles by creating a new aristocracy over the heads of the old, he endeavoured to repair the breach by sacrificing his sister's happiness. The country was in a miserable state of anarchy. The extraordinary spectacle was witnessed of two sovereigns reigning simultaneously over one kingdom ; for the nobility had forced Henry to surrender his young brother Alfonso to them, solemnly crowned him king, and he held his own court, convoked the Cortes, and administered laws.

The Marquis of Villena, a capable and intriguing man, had been one of the foremost to confer the title of king upon Alfonso, but at the same time kept up a secret correspondence with his master, in case of misfortune. Thus the brilliant idea occurred to Henry of uniting the contending parties by forming an alliance between his sister and the brother of the Marquis, Don Pedro Giron, Grand Master of the Order of Calatrava.

Isabella's anger and grief were intense. Don Pedro was well known as a fierce and warlike leader of faction, and his private life was stained with all the vices of his time. The young princess was in despair. She confined herself to her room, neither sleeping nor eating for a day and night, but spending her hours in entreaties to Heaven to spare her this dishonour. Her most intimate friend and companion, Doña Beatriz de Bobdilla, not only shared her solitude, but was prepared to show her sympathy in a practical manner. For when Isabella bewailed her hard fate to her she drew from her bosom a dagger, vowing solemnly to plunge it into the heart of the Master of Calatrava the moment he appeared !

But Heaven heard their prayers. The intended bridegroom, starting in haste for Madrid, with a splendid retinue and sumptuous preparations, was taken ill with a violent disorder, which ended his life in four days. He is said to have died with imprecations on his lips at the disappointment of not living a few weeks longer.

Isabella was thus safe from immediate danger, but other difficulties crowded thickly round her. Her brother Alfonso died suddenly, not without some suspicion of poison, and, deprived of his protection, she retired to a monastery at Avila. Here she was visited by the Archbishop of Toledo, who, on behalf of the nobles, offered her the crown recently held by Alfonso. But in vain he begged her to allow herself to be

proclaimed Queen of Castile. With firm persistence in the path of duty, she steadily refused, affirming that 'while her brother Henry lived, none other had a right to the crown.' To this course she adhered in spite of all protestations, but at the same time declared herself willing to co-operate with her brother in any schemes of reconciliation or reform of abuses. A reconciliation was subsequently effected on various conditions—those affecting Isabella being our only concern.

She was to have the principality of the Asturias—usually accorded to the heir apparent—have suitable provision for her rank; be immediately recognised as heir to the crowns of Castile and Leon; and not be constrained to marry in opposition to her own wishes, or without her brother's consent.

This public announcement of her claims at a time when Spain was all powerful brought forward fresh suitors for her hand. One of these was a brother of Edward IV. of England, generally supposed to be Richard of Gloucester. It is curious to speculate what might have been the different fortunes of both kingdoms had his proposal been accepted.

Isabella, however, knew her own mind; and the person towards whom she turned a favourable eye was her kinsman, Ferdinand of Aragon. Apart from his personal attractions—for Ferdinand was handsome, chivalrous, and athletic—her sound common sense at once detected the advantages of the union. Both parties spoke one language, were descended from one common stock; and the proximity of Aragon and Castile made it desirable that the two states should be welded into one. Separate, they would always remain insignificant; united, they might claim rank as one of the European powers.

It is amusing to note how, even at this early age, the young princess did not allow her heart to govern her head. Another suitor for her hand was the Duke de Guienne, heir-presumptive to the French crown; and Isabella determined to acquaint herself privately with their personal characters before deciding upon so momentous a step. Accordingly her chaplain was despatched privately to the two courts, and the result of his investigation must have been very gratifying, for he reported: 'The Duke de Guienne was a feeble, effeminate prince with limbs so emaciated as to be almost deformed, and with eyes so weak and watery as to incapacitate him for the ordinary exercises of chivalry;' while Ferdinand, on the other hand,

was 'possessed of a comely, symmetrical figure, a graceful demeanour, and a spirit that was up to anything.'

Henceforward the story reads like a romance. There is a sound of marriage bells mingling with the deeper toll of apprehension. Isabella, having despatched a favourable answer to Ferdinand, retires again to her mother's protection at Madrigal while Ferdinand signs the marriage articles. Dangers crowd thickly round the young couple. Again does the Marquis of Villena muster his forces, fearful at the progress of events. Isabella is virtually in a prison, her letters intercepted, her friends gone, her own person in danger. But she rises above it all. There is a secret message conveyed to the Archbishop of Toledo; a small body of horse appear before the gates of the city, and the bride-elect is borne off in triumph to receive the welcome of the enthusiastic citizens of Valladolid. From hence are sent urgent messages to hasten the steps of the bridegroom. He too is in difficulties. There is no money in the coffers of Aragon; nothing wherewith to provide an escort for their prince into a hostile country. But love has ever found out a way. Disguised as merchants, Ferdinand and a few faithful friends set forth for Castile, the prince acting as servant and tending the mules when they halted for the night. Fortune seemed against them. At one place they left behind the purse containing their slender funds; at another, a sentinel, mistaking them for enemies, hurled down a piece of rock so near to Ferdinand's head as almost to finish the enterprise once and for ever. But his voice is recognised by his friends within; there is a joyful welcome, the necessary escort is provided, and the prince reaches Duenas in safety.

The meeting between the lovers took place immediately afterwards at Valladolid. One likes to picture the pleasure each must have taken in this first view of the other, looked forward to with that curiosity which human nature has ever displayed towards the unknown. We may fairly conclude that neither experienced disappointment.

'Isabella,' writes one of her ladies, 'was the handsomest lady I ever beheld, and the most gracious in her manners.'

She was tall, with a fair complexion, bright chestnut hair, and blue eyes, and, from all accounts, 'exceedingly beautiful.' Intellect and dignity were prominent in her every feature. Ferdinand, a year younger than the princess, appeared in all the vigour and strength of eighteen years. Handsome,

muscular, free from youthful vices and excesses, temperate almost to ascetism, he must have presented as brave an appearance as any girl could wish for her lover. And thus Isabella seemed to think ; for when, after an interview of two hours, Ferdinand returned to Duenas, all preliminaries were settled.

Even at this supreme moment Isabella would stoop to no deceit. She sent a full account of her proceedings to Henry, excusing her own conduct by reason of the malice of her enemies. She and Ferdinand were then publicly married at Valladolid on October 19, 1469. So great, however, was the poverty of the two parties that they had to borrow money for the expenses of the ceremony ! It was thus under circumstances the most adverse that two kingdoms were joined whose union was to so largely affect the world.

And it did not end here. The young couple were to be early trained in that school which ever develops character and strengthens energy. Their purse was so empty that they could scarcely defray the expenses of their table ; but the dignity and decorum of Isabella's court and conduct contrasted favourably with the licentiousness of her brother's, and drew all hearts to her.

War still sounded its alarum on all sides ; and the only respite came with Henry's death on December 11, 1474. Two days later Isabella was solemnly crowned Queen of Castile and Segovia. The ceremonial was far simpler than at the present day. The nobles, clergy, and other dignitaries escorted her to the principal square of the city, whither she rode on a palfrey, with an officer bearing a naked sword before her. On arriving, she seated herself on the throne prepared for her, while a herald proclaimed, 'Castile, Castile, for the king, Don Ferdinand, and his consort, Doña Isabella, queen proprietor of these kingdoms !' Then, amid the blare of trumpets and shouts of her subjects, Isabella rode towards the cathedral, and returned thanks to God for the protection hitherto vouchsafed her ; craving aid and counsel in the great responsibility she was now assuming.

Ferdinand, absent, and helping his father, seems on his return to have raised some objections to the power being thus vested so completely in his consort. But Isabella used her gentlest womanly arts. One likes to see the wife behind the queen as she soothes her offended husband by reminding him that the distribution of power is merely nominal, that his will is

ever hers ; that upholding the succession and privileges of a female succession now would redound in the future to the advantage of their only child—a daughter.

There was indeed need for union at home. Alfonso of Portugal again espoused the cause of Joanna, and for four and a half years a long and disastrous War of Succession lasted ; then a treaty of peace was signed. The person who suffered most by this treaty was the unfortunate Princess Joanna, who had been the innocent cause of so much bloodshed. Determined henceforth to have no more to do with a world in which she had so cruelly suffered, she sought shelter in the convent of Santa Clara at Coimbra, and took the 'irrevocable vows.'

Reforms of all kinds now claimed the attention of the new king and queen. During Henry's lax and feeble reign the country was literally without law or order. Violence and immorality prevailed on all hands. But Isabella was undaunted by the Herculean task which lay before her. She revived the Holy Brotherhood—an order of military police whose power had formerly been exercised against the crown, but which she now, with ready tact, employed as a powerful agent in the work of amendment. Also she and her husband restored the old custom of personally attending once a week at the law courts. Capital punishment was the order of the day for the smallest offence, the criminal being shot with arrows. There seems to have been but small mercy shown, for the enactment reads : 'The convict shall receive the Sacrament like a Catholic Christian, and after that be executed as speedily as possible, in order that his soul may pass the more securely.'

Other reforms which she undertook were the codification of the laws ; the restriction of the power of the nobles, who formed a striking analogy to the feudal barons of our Plantagenet times ; trade regulated ; agriculture increased and encouraged, and the pre-eminence of royal authority insisted upon. Example rather than force formed the keynote of this latter measure. No breath of scandal was allowed to hover over the court. High-born damsels were educated under the motherly eye of the queen ; her masculine energy of character brought the guilty quailing to her feet ; temperance and frugality preached potent sermons from the dress and table of the royal pair, and this silent influence worked wonders.

But Isabella did not rest here. It must ever remain as a

shadow over her brilliant reign that the terrors of the Inquisition were originated and carried out in all their fearful extremities under the rule of one of the best women who ever filled a throne. That she honestly believed she was but following the stern path of duty—unflinching even from measures which filled her woman's heart with pity—there can be no reasonable doubt. In all ages weakest, frailest human nature has waxed strong over questions of religion, and performed wonders at which the world stands to gaze—silent and amazed.

From her earliest days Isabella had been bred up to a horror of heresy. Her mind had been moulded by a man whose name will ever stand forth as symbolical of cruelty. Thomas de Torquemada, while confessor to the young princess, had extorted a promise from her that, in the event of her ever coming to the throne, 'she should devote herself to the extirpation of heresy, for the glory of God and the exaltation of the Catholic faith.'

Thus we find Isabella bound from the first by a promise which her upright character would not dream of breaking. Fortunately, however, her clear common sense and kindness of heart prevented her going to those lengths which Torquemada urged. His fanaticism amounted to insanity. During the eighteen years during which he reigned supreme as Inquisitor-General it is computed that no less than six thousand persons were convicted annually; of which some were burnt, others mutilated, tortured, or incarcerated for life. The horrors of the Inquisition are too well known in history and romance to be detailed here, and, indeed, space forbids it; but it is only fair to Isabella's memory to recall that in its earliest days she urged the experiment of mercy and friendly exhortations before the enforcement of more rigorous measures. That they were not used is perhaps not her fault.

But it was not alone by the Inquisition that Isabella tried to uphold the ascendancy of the Cross. The same years which beheld secret tribunals at home saw also a fierce warfare abroad. These were the days when first efforts were made to wrest Southern Spain from the hands which had held it so long. Granada the great, the beautiful, stood foremost among its cities as the stronghold of the Moors. No fairy legend can draw a more dazzling picture than of this queenly city, described as an 'enamelled vase, sparkling with hyacinths and

emeralds.' Time and space both forbid a description, which might be extended to many pages. But it gave its name to the war which lasted so many years. In the minds of most Spaniards the war of Granada was carried on for the purpose of subduing the Moors. In Isabella's mind it was to re-establish the empire of the Cross.

She has been justly called the 'soul of this war.' From first to last her powerful spirit never flagged. Ill-health did not prevent her pushing forward with supplies when needed at Cordova. To her care was entrusted the control of the artillery department. Summoning the most skilful engineers from France, Germany, and Italy, she had forges erected in the camp, and all materials supplied for the manufacture of cannon, balls, and powder. We hear the ring of the anvil as the busy artisans ply their trade. These engines of war were far more clumsy than the neat weapons of our own day. Cannon, about twelve feet in length, consisted of iron bars two inches in breadth, held together by bolts and rings of the same metal. From these were thrown balls of iron, or marble, fourteen inches in diameter, and weighing one hundred and seventy-five pounds. Isabella's efforts succeeded in bringing into action such a train of artillery as no other European power of that day possessed.

She frequently visited the camps in person, and while encouraging the men to hardships, relieved their necessities by gifts of clothes and money. To her woman's heart, too, belongs the proud distinction of erecting the first regular camp hospital on record; for she instituted tents known as 'queen's hospitals,' furnishing them with attendants and medicines from her private purse. It is scarcely wonderful if such a woman earned the love and gratitude of a nation who to this day can see no fault in her.

Once during this period she was brought again into touch with England; for the war attracted many cavaliers from neighbouring countries, and among them Earl Rivers—or Lord Scales, as he was popularly called in Spain—whose acts of prowess so delighted the queen that she presented him with magnificent gifts, foremost among which were twelve Andalusian horses, sumptuous pavilions for himself and his suite, fine linen, and two couches hung with cloth-of-gold.

It is perhaps best to finish this brief summary of the war before turning to other subjects. It was ended after nearly

nine years by the capitulation of Granada in 1491. Deeds of bravery and chivalry on both sides were so numerous that they might vie with the most thrilling adventures which delight boys' hearts. And among so much bloodshed it is pretty to read of one softer act of chivalry.

While Malaga was being besieged some Spanish children wandered from their quarters towards the enemy's lines. Here they were noticed by a noble Moor. Far from injuring them, he touched them lightly with the handle of his lance, saying, 'Get ye gone, varlets, to your mothers.' Some of his comrades, less magnanimous, asked the reason of this leniency. 'Because I saw no beard upon their chins,' was his simple answer.

Twice during this war the king and queen had narrow escapes of their lives. Once, when a Moorish prisoner, begging to be brought before the sovereigns on the plea of having important disclosures to make, attempted to stab them, but was foiled by mistaking the persons of a nobleman and lady-in-waiting for those of the sovereigns. And again, before Granada, when a lamp set fire to the hangings of the pavilion in which the queen and her children were sleeping. They escaped with difficulty.

These accidents speak for themselves of Isabella's continual presence in the camp—and indeed the war scarcely seemed to prosper without her. Again and again we find Ferdinand sending urgent messages for her at some critical moment. The queen's person is better than a mighty reinforcement. Clad in superb armour, she rides about the camp, calling on the men to remember their country, their homes, their religion. Brave words to rouse the feeble-hearted, to brace the weary to greater efforts, gentle comfort for the sick, sympathy for all. One moment her arm would be upraised in inspiring courage; then, bending down, the soft hand would soothe a dying man's pillow, and whisper words of strength for the long journey.

Even when absent, her efforts never relaxed. No one worked harder than the queen, collecting supplies, constructing roads, gathering together at large personal sacrifice the vast sums required to carry on operations. She was the pivot upon which all revolved.

And through it all her mother's heart beat warmly, and we may fancy often very heavily too. For in December, 1483, a little daughter—her youngest child—first opened her eyes, and began her voyage on the waves of what was indeed to be to her

a troublesome world, and add another link to the chain which binds this great queen to us. It is strange that Isabella's child (Catherine of Aragon, as she was afterwards called) should have been the wife of the man who put down in England that religion for which her mother fought so fiercely in Spain.

Sounds of wedding bells, also, were heard above the din of war. Isabella had to part with her eldest and best loved daughter, named after herself, who in 1490 was affianced to Alfonso, heir to the Portuguese throne. Nothing but the political necessity of the case could have reconciled Isabella to this step. Portugal lay at the very borders of her kingdom ; it had always been forward in espousing the cause of Joanna, and was therefore a dangerous enemy. As a friend it might be of the utmost service. These considerations weighed with Isabella beyond even her maternal love. To serve her country well was the guiding principle of her life. Yet it is not without tears and tremblings that we see her yielding up this first child on the altar of devotion ; and indeed this same love and care for her children is manifested all through her life. When the second daughter, Joanna, is to sail for Flanders to marry the Archduke Philip, we find Isabella accompanying her to the very port of embarkation, in order to postpone the hour of separation as long as possible. All through the tedious, anxious voyage we see the royal mother listening to the winds and waves, sending for the most experienced navigators in her realm to consult with them as to storms, delays, and dangers of the sea. We can picture her rejoicing when the news came of the vessel's safe arrival and the happy nuptials. Mothers' hearts had need to be strong in those days. Not only was communication far more difficult, but they had to part with their darlings at an age when other happy children only play in their nurseries. Negotiations for the marriage which was to ally the little Doña Catalina with England were begun at the tender age of five years. All Isabella's four daughters lived to reign, but their lives were chequered with many troubles. Her only son John, who married Margaret, daughter of the Emperor Maximilian of Austria, died in the prime of his youth a few months after the marriage. The Queen received the tidings with that meekness and resignation of which strong minds are ever capable. 'The Lord hath given,' she exclaimed, 'and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be His name.'

'Never was there a death which occasioned such deep and

general lamentation throughout the land,' writes a chronicler ; and indeed grief for his early death seems to have been universal. May we not trace some parallel between that young life thus laid low in those far-off times and the one which threw our own nation into mourning such a few short years ago ? In both cases the peal of the marriage bells was changed to the funeral dirge. Like our own Royal Family, the afflicted parents were able to derive some comfort from the knowledge that their own careful training had made the object of it worthy to draw forth such sorrow.

From their earliest years Isabella superintended the education and upbringing of her children. No responsibilities of government made her forget for a moment that a woman's first kingdom is that which lies nearest to her—her home. Like all great characters, she never considered her own education finished ; but sedulously continued the culture begun during the years of her girlish seclusion. After her accession she set herself to learn Latin, then a most important medium of communication between *savants*, and applied herself with such diligence to the task that in less than a year she had acquired such proficiency as enabled her to understand without much difficulty anything written or spoken in the Latin language.

Her daughters were accorded every advantage, masters, native and foreign, being engaged for them. They inherited their mother's dignity of manner and unaffected piety, but none could equal her business-like mind. The education of her only son was even more carefully watched over. A class of ten boys, five older, five his own age, lived with him at the palace, sharing his studies and pleasures, in order that the young prince might not be excluded from the beneficial influences of a public school education. He was taught everything which might fit him for the important duties which alas ! he never assumed.

And Isabella's care did not cease here. It extended to the young nobility, who were encouraged to look upon feats of learning as equal to those of the chivalry which they had formerly considered unrivalled. She gathered both men and women of science round her, and gave priceless gifts of books to libraries at a time when books were worth their weight in gold. And, best of all, she recognised from the first moment every advantage that the introduction of printing into her kingdom would bring in its train. Every

facility and privilege was offered to those who forwarded it, and some of the works composed by her own subjects were printed at her private charge.

From out the crowd of illustrious names moving like stars round their sun and centre, space allows us only to distinguish one.

To the court before Granada, in the very midst of the Moorish War, 1484, came a poor Genoese navigator. His visions of land beyond the seas had been treated as idle dreams when submitted to the Portuguese king. His own city of Genoa turned a deaf ear to them. Isabella, always accessible to science, consented to take them into consideration, if primarily approved of by a council of her own appointment. So unfavourable, however, was their decision, pronouncing his scheme as 'vain and impracticable,' that the discomfited sailor had nearly carried his plans to France, had not the queen's better judgment awoke in time to add this fresh lustre of discovery to her glorious reign.

Columbus was politic as well as adventurous. He touched Isabella's most vital point when he reminded her that new lands meant not only increased trade and riches, but new fields in which to sow the good seed and win over souls for the Cross. Those were the days of chivalry and romance; the spirit of the Crusades still lingered over Europe, and Isabella yielded. Her own generous nature spoke louder than the voices of timid counsellors.

'I will assume the undertaking for my kingdom of Castile!' she cried, 'and am ready to pawn my jewels to defray the expenses of it if the funds of the treasury shall be found inadequate.'

The funds were indeed low, war having drained them to the last drop. In spite of the queen's support it was only a fleet of three vessels which sailed from the little port of Palos to find those West India islands towards which the eyes of to-day are turned in eager anxiety.

One hundred and twenty persons sailed forth on the unfathomed waste of waters, August 3, 1492. Exactly seven months and eleven days later (March 15, 1493) Columbus re-entered the port with one vessel. He had gone despised, ridiculed, unpopular. Nothing was too good for him when he returned. Bells ringing merry peals, a shouting populace, a king and queen rising to do him honour—such was the recep-

tion that met his return. He came laden with specimens of gold, samples of fruits and vegetables, to prove the richness of the soil, graphic descriptions of the beauty of the islands. His eloquence melted the last vestige of coldness. King and queen prostrated themselves in thanksgiving; they loaded the navigator with every dignity and honour. Henceforward his voyages were undertaken not only with their consent, but backed by substantial supplies and means of transport. In fact, when Columbus presented himself before the queen after his second voyage, Isabella defrayed the cost of an outfit to the colony from funds designed for her daughter's marriage with the King of Portugal.

When he fell into disgrace in 1500 it was she who stood his friend, and was even moved to tears when he returned to plead his own cause. Her gentle heart bled for his woes at the same time that it bewailed those of the natives whom he was accused of oppressing.

Such was ever the character of the woman who made the name of Spain glorious. She never shrank from duty, however much it might wound her own tender sensibilities. When her new subjects were to be converted to Christianity she pleads that it may be done with the utmost gentleness possible. When she urged her husband and soldiers to war, she was ever ready with presence, aid, and comfort to mitigate its horrors. Love of country, a passionate devotion to her husband and children, and a wish to leave the world better than she found it were the characteristics of her life.

The masculine qualities which made her so great a queen were mellowed by feminine occupations which other women might do well to imitate. One moment, her 'delicate limbs cased in knightly mail,' she rode among her soldiers, inspiring them to fresh courage; the next, bending over a dying man's bed in the camp hospital, she soothes his last hours with words of hope. From presiding at the Council Chamber she goes to sit with the meek nuns in the convent, occupying her fingers the while with needlework. Public business was never allowed to interfere with the sacredness of family life. We have already noticed how carefully her children's education was conducted; and her daughters were further instructed in every humble detail of domestic usefulness—their mother considering 'nothing too humble to learn which could be useful.'

In private life also the strictest frugality and temperance were enforced. Food, dress, private expenditure were regulated in every detail. But at the same time she never forgot that rank demands certain concessions. On public occasions no dress was more magnificent, no banquet more splendid than that of the queen.

From first to last she used that grandest, noblest possession of women—her influence—for good. Leading a stainless life herself, she endeavoured to exert her power to call forth the same in others. Her court was a nursery for the daughters of the nobility. The young cavaliers were encouraged to recognise that true chivalry consists in honouring womanhood rather than paying it compliments.

The errors of her reign rose from an exaggeration of that same deep-rooted piety which laid the foundation of, and upheld, her greatness. There can be no adequate excuse found for the horrors of the Inquisition, and the expulsion of the Jews ; but it must be left to the one of us who has never made a mistake to cast the first stone at her.

And if she erred she suffered. High position does not exempt from sorrow. Palace gates cannot shut out death. Her daughters were all queens, but they wept, and suffered, and died, like the meanest beggar on the highway. And the sword which pierced *them* went through their mother's heart also. To her came the feet of messengers with tidings of her only son's death : scarcely had their echo died away when others, hurrying, sped to summon her to hold in her arms that best-loved daughter Isabella, while she breathed her last sigh. It was the queen's hand which smoothed her own mother's dying pillow ; and then the royal heart was called upon to bear a deeper pain. Her second daughter Joanna lost not life, but reason.

This last blow was too much for the brave mother spirit. Her own health, possibly impaired by the gigantic efforts required of it for so many years, now visibly declined. Both she and her husband were taken ill with fever, but while Ferdinand's vigorous constitution easily threw off the malady Isabella slowly sank. Yet to her last breath this woman's tremendous energy never failed. From her sick-couch she still 'ruled the world.' Thither came travellers with their wonderful tales ; distinguished foreigners were received in audience ; the latest home or foreign news was recited to her

by her attendants. She allowed no sadness to darken the hours which her brave spirit would fain leave as a bright legacy. Her will is, perhaps, one of the most touching which has descended to posterity. It began with public matters. Every arrangement was detailed for her funeral, prescribing the simplest, most informal rites—thus hoping even by her last act to correct that lavish expenditure for funeral obsequies which prevailed in Castile. Then charity occupied her thoughts: the discharge of her personal debts, marriage portions for poor maidens—all that a woman's tender heart could suggest. The maintenance of good laws for her people, care for the bodies and souls of natives in that new Western kingdom, provision for a proper income to supply the wants of the crown—such were some of the measures.

Then we come nearer home. Joanna and her husband Philip are appointed successors to the throne of Castile, with Ferdinand as regent in case the princess's malady should increase; and with touching earnestness she beseeches her daughter to live with her husband in that love which ever characterised their parents' union, and begs them both to show towards Ferdinand that deference and filial devotion 'due to him beyond every other parent, for his eminent virtues.'

Her love for her husband never wavered, though we have reason to believe that his constancy did not rise above the temptations of the age. For his personal maintenance she makes a special provision, 'though less than she could wish, and far less than he deserves.' While begging that her body might be laid to rest in the Franciscan monastery of Santa Isabella in the Alhambra, she adds this saving clause, 'Should the king, my lord, prefer a sepulchre in some other place, then my will is that my body be there transported, and laid by his side: that the union we have enjoyed in this world, and, through the mercy of God, may hope again for our souls in heaven, may be represented by our bodies in the earth.' And then she gives him of her best.

'I beseech the king, my lord,' goes on this loving testament, 'that he will accept all my jewels, or such as he shall select, so that, seeing them, he may be reminded of the singular love I always bore him while living, and that I am now waiting for him in a better world, by which remembrance he may be encouraged to live the more justly and holily in this.'

Having thus provided for her country, her people, her dearest and best, she received the last offices of the Church, and on November 26, 1504, gave up the life she had tried to live so bravely.

It was to Granada—the city rescued for the Cross—that her spirit turned, and thither they took her mortal remains. No stars or sun were seen during the mournful procession. Nothing but pouring rain and torrents which swept away roads and bridges, as though Nature mingled her tears with those of a sorrowing nation. The precious dust was laid in the humble monastery; and in later years, when she and her husband were together again, their bodies were transported to the royal chapel of the metropolitan Church, and their illustrious grandson Charles V. erected a magnificent mausoleum of white marble over them.

Fifty-three years of womanhood, and thirty years a queen ! What wonder if there were faults, many and grievous, during so long a span ? But to us it seems as though her virtues outweighed them. Our eyes must wear the glasses of the fifteenth century before we can clearly judge. Bigotry was the curse of the age ; tolerance almost unknown. Against it we have to set a passionate love of country ; an earnest desire for the welfare of her people ; true friendship, filial affection of the tenderest type ; love of husband and children deeper, tenderer, fuller, than anything of that time can show. And, when we add to this intelligence far above the average of her day, purity of life, so spotless that not even the 'fierce light which beats upon a throne' could find one flaw in it ; a depth of common sense not often found in the feminine brain—who will deny to Isabella of Castile a place in the first rank as woman, mother, wife, and queen ?

M. F. W.

HOW MOSLEMS FAST.

BY LUCY M. J. GARNETT (AUTHOR OF 'THE WOMEN OF
TURKEY,' ETC., TRANSLATOR OF 'GREEK FOLK-POESY')

'As soon as any one of you observeth the Moon, let him set about the Fast.'

SO spake the Prophet of Islam. And all over the Moslem world, at the end of the eighth lunar month, lone sentinels on minaret and mountain watch for the appearance of the Moon of Ramazan. The moment the first faint silver streak is visible the watcher hastens to announce the tidings to the expectant multitude.

'Hast thou seen the Moon?' is the question which greets him on his return to the haunts of men.

'I have seen him,' is the solemn reply.

The news spreads like wildfire through the city, and 'the Faithful' immediately 'set about the fast.' For Ramazan is the most important event in the Mohammedan year, and its due observance is held to be one of the 'Five Pillars of Practice' of the religion of Islam. This month is also to Moslems a kind of revival time. Western customs, wherever adopted, are, for the time being, laid aside, and the more primitive native manners reverted to. Peace and goodwill reign supreme, and charity and hospitality are largely practised, though the wealthy do not now, as in olden days, literally stand at their doors to bring in and set at their supper-tables all the poor who pass by. More time is also devoted during this period to religious observances; many devout Moslems seclude themselves for a portion of each day in the mosques, and abstain from all worldly conversation, more especially during the last ten days of the fast.

On the twenty-seventh day of Ramazan is celebrated the anniversary of 'The Night of Power'—the night during which the Koran is believed by Moslems to have come down entire

¹ In Arabic the Moon is masculine.

to the 'Lower Heaven,' whence it was revealed in portions to the Prophet by the Angel Gabriel. According to popular belief, the waters of the sea become sweet on this night; the whole animal and vegetable creations bow themselves in humble adoration before Allah; and the destinies of men for the coming year are revealed to the angels.

The Moslem year being lunar, Ramazan makes in time the round of the seasons. But through the long hot days of summer, as well as in the short winter days, the Faithful rigidly abstain during this month from food, drink, and tobacco between dawn and sunset. To the poor, who are among its strictest observers, and whom necessity compels to pursue their usual avocations unrefreshed, this period is one of real mortification of the flesh, especially in hot weather. The wealthy, however, merely turn night into day, and very little official business is transacted.

As the sun approaches the horizon, a tray is brought in to the assembled family, or company, laden with *mezzliks*—tiny plates of sweets, dried fish, fruit, olives, and other *hors d'œuvres*—together with glasses of iced sherbet, made from fresh fruits. As soon as the sunset gun has thundered out the welcome tidings that the fast is at an end for the day, each person utters a *Bismillah*! (In the name of Allah!) and helps himself to an olive, it being considered more meritorious to break the fast with that than with any other edible. After the contents of the tray have been sparingly partaken of, the evening meal, for which special sweets and delicacies are at this season prepared, is served.

Two hours after sunset the *Tarawih* prayers are performed, either at the mosque or in private. It is customary at Constantinople at the close of these prayers to repair to the esplanade adjoining the Suliemanieh mosque, a delightful promenade planted with cypress and plane-trees, and situated at the juncture of the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn. Here hundreds of elegant equipages filled with Turkish beauties may be seen slowly making their way through the crowds of pedestrians who, on this occasion, allow themselves, and are allowed, a Carnival license quite unknown at any other time.

The working classes, who have their usual avocations to pursue on the morrow, usually retire to rest after the *Tarawih* prayers. The wealthy, however, as I have already mentioned,

turn night into day, pay calls, give parties, and spend the time in a round of feasts and entertainments.

Two hours before dawn the 'Awakeners' take their way through the streets of the Turkish quarters to warn those who sleep that it is time to arise and prepare the *sahor*, the last meal eaten before sunrise. Accompanied by a boy carrying a lantern, the 'Awakener' stops before every Moslem house, and taps a small drum three times, after which he chants—

' He prospereth who saith :
There is no god but God !'

He then beats the drum as before and adds : ' Mohammed, the Guide, is the Apostle of Allah !'

And after repeating the notes on his instrument, he passes on with this greeting : ' The happiest of nights unto thee, O Achmet !' (or whatever the householder's name may be).

When the *sahor* has been partaken of, the time is filled up with smoking and coffee-sipping until the boom of cannon announces the moment for rinsing the mouth and 'sealing' it against food until the evening.

The name of this season of day fasting and night feasting invariably conjures up before me the fair scenes amid which I first witnessed its observance, under the blue skies of an Asian winter—a winter the charm of which still lingers pleasantly in my memory. For I was then but newly arrived from the fog and gloom of a Western manufacturing town ; and the grand mountain scenery, brilliant colouring, and sunny air of the East were to me a perpetual joy.

Ramazan fell that year in December, when I was on a visit to an Armenian family in the little town of Bournabat, about six miles from Smyrna. The house, a long, low, one-storied building, opening on one side on a wide verandah, was situated at the juncture of the Armenian and Turkish quarters of the town. And having become, for the time being, as idle as the daughters of my hostess, good, kindly Kokona Mariem ('Mistress Mary,') I accompanied them, hatless and gloveless as they were, though hardly perhaps in such Oriental *déshabille*, in all their little strolls through the neighbouring streets, stopping here and there to gossip with any acquaintance, Christian or Moslem, who might be visible. For, under ordinary circumstances, there is considerable social intercourse

between Turks and Armenians when they happen to be neighbours.

Every evening at supper, Ramazan loaves—long, flat cakes, plentifully besprinkled with sesame seeds—were laid by each cover instead of the customary hunch of bread, and a dish of some Ramazan delicacy, sent by a Turkish neighbour, often appeared on the table. During the small hours of every night the 'Awakeners' passed our garden walls, the monotonous beat of their little drums, and the wild, yet plaintively sweet chant mingling with our dreams, and producing in the stillness of the night a singularly romantic impression.

THE STRONG GOD CIRCUMSTANCE.

BY HELEN SHIPTON, AUTHOR OF 'THE HERONS,' 'DAGMAR,' ETC.

BOOK II.

'OF THE WILL OF THE PRINCESS.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW.

'—There stirreth, very deep below
The hidden beating slow
And the blind yearning and the long-drawn breath
Of the love that conquers death.'

DOWN in the valley, where Lassington Hall lay dark and still through the brief summer night, Vanessa Carroll too was passing through some of those hours that in one sense never pass, that leave their mark upon the soul that undergoes them, for all time and perhaps for Eternity. No after-sorrow ever blurs the memory of such an experience, no after-joy affects the gain or loss that it has brought : it is like birth, or death, or some other inevitable incommunicable event, from which there is no going back, no viewing the world again from the old standpoint.

There is perhaps hardly a woman who could well bear to discover that her unconscious hand had done irremediable harm. If the damage is only great enough it seems so futile, so irrelevant, to remember that it was also unintentional.

And Vanessa had loved all her life to play the good princess—she believed that she had done good always—it had been her rôle to be fortunate in this as in all other things.

But now the deeper wrong that she had done of late to Redmond Vaughan seemed only the climax, the inevitable sequence, of that childish tragedy. As a child she had been the unconscious instrument that had robbed his life of almost

all its possibilities, and now she had come into it again, half-wilfully, to rob it of the low beginnings of content.

One pang that might have been hers Vanessa spared herself—her own mind was generous enough to understand the generosity of her lover, and she knew that he had never needed to ‘forgive’ her, that none of that not unnatural repugnance to which his poor mother had confessed had ever crossed his mind with the thought of her. ‘He could not feel unkindly towards a woman or a child—not even towards one who had injured him willingly,’ she said to herself. ‘But that makes my load of remorse no lighter.’

What was she to do ? Words were little. What could you say to a man whose life you had unwittingly laid desolate ? Words were nothing, but what was there that she could *do* ? What had she to give to him from whom she had taken all ?

Vanessa knew that to some of her lovers it had meant something that she was Sir Francis Carroll’s daughter ; and some had not forgotten that she had already inherited one fortune and would probably inherit another. But character and circumstances had combined to make those things less than nothing to Redmond—even her beauty he would not estimate, as some men might, at its value in the eyes of the world.

Stripped then of all adventitious charms and aids, simply as a woman—with no more thought of any one or anything beside than if they two had been the first man and woman in the garden that was planted eastward in Eden—what had she, Vanessa Carroll, to give to the man who loved her ?

Could she give him her whole self, heart and soul, without the backward glance that he would be sure to perceive, the regret that would be another and an unpardonable wrong done to him ?

It was like a creature of one element resolving to live in another—the ardent spirit might desire, but flesh and blood could hardly conceive of such a change as possible, as the change from her world to his.

Vanessa had put out her light, and sat beside the open window, looking out into that scented dimness that answers to darkness in a summer’s night.

Her face glimmered pale through the twilight, and the dusky coils of her hair hung down over her white wrapper. Her ears, sharpened with listening for she knew not what, heard none of the night sounds that had been familiar to them

in other lands—only the long trill of the night-jar, the occasional whirr of some night-flying beetle, heavy on the wing, and the whisper of the wind among the leaves, that sounded like footsteps ever drawing nearer, that never came near.

It was into her own heart she was looking, with those wide, dark eyes, and she saw there many things—some that she had never dreamed were there.

Feelings and instincts were stirring in her, more deeply rooted, more a part of her inmost being, than those by which she had lived hitherto.

She saw the world that she had known, the distractions that she had very heartily enjoyed, the friends of whom she had been fond—and who would perhaps hear of her with surprise and regret, as of one on whom the convent gates had closed, shutting them out for ever. But she saw them all as on the white table in the *camera obscura*—they lived and moved, the colouring was the same, but they were small and far away—no sound of their voices reached her where she sat.

Even her father, and his regret—the disappointment of all his hopes and ambitions for her—took that place in her mind which we accord to that which we are deeply sorry for but which no regrets can alter.

Behind the character that circumstance had moulded for her she seemed to find now another, more deeply based—more enduring—more *herself*.

Like other girls, Vanessa had dreamed sometimes of her bridal day, and it is not much to be wondered at if it had seemed to her as the day when she should stoop from her maiden sovereignty to make some man happy beyond his fellows, when her own vow of honour and obedience should be the pretty legal fiction by which she should bind to herself for ever a true knight and slave more devoted than the rest.

That vision too had suddenly faded, grown meaningless as the conclusion of some vapid novel; and what she saw instead was a scene out of a love-story of immemorial antiquity. Had she seen it in some tableau or picture, or dreamed it long ago when childish dreams were as vivid as realities—that veiled woman standing humbly before the man she loved, with clasped hands and downbent eyes? It seemed to Vanessa that she had felt the marble floor cool to her bare, slender feet, that it was her voice that murmured, '*If I have found favour*

in the eyes of my lord'—that it was her pulse that had quickened in suspense, waiting for the deep-toned response and the clasp of a strong hand.

Could it be that the heart of that gentle Eastern woman throbbed beneath the jewels of the society queen? She might easily have gone through life without ever having had occasion to answer that question, but it was forced upon her now in a sufficiently insistent tone. *Which* was she? The woman who had ambitions of her own, who loved the world and all its gifts, and weighed herself and her possessions in its balances? Or that other woman to whom love was not merely enough, but all, who was content not merely to merge her ambition in that of a man, but to give up all and count it nothing?

What was it he used to sing—Ian Cameron—the nice boy who stayed a few weeks and made such friends with them all, and then went on up to Burma and never came back—killed in some nameless frontier skirmish?—

*'The love that I have chosen
I'll be therewith content,
The salt sea shall be frozen
Before that I repent.'*

Suddenly Vanessa saw again the honest, hopeless, worshipping look in Cameron's blue eyes—and *knew what it meant*. She had been very kind to the boy who was lying now in his unmarked grave in the Burmese jungle, very careful not to deceive him or to do him harm; but she had never known before the language that those eyes of his had spoken. Her soul had learnt it now, and the knowledge was awful and precious, as one might fancy that New Name to be that no man knoweth but he who has earned it. The tears rained softly down her cheeks at the thought of the young lover whom she had not loved: but she was not sorry for him. To pity would have been to insult him, so sure she was now that such love as his was its own exceeding great reward.

The thought of him had brought her that certainty, had taught her to know herself and her own true happiness; and if Ian Cameron could have known that, his knightly soul would have counted the boon as cheap at the price of the life that he had flung away in sheer light-hearted, boyish bravery.

Unconsciously Vanessa rose, and took the very attitude of the woman in her vision, her hands clasped, and bare white

arms hanging before her, her hair falling round her like a veil.

'I know to whom I belong,' she said to herself deliberately. 'I will not ask him to forgive me, for I know he would never admit that there was anything to forgive. But I will kneel to him if he will not take me without. And when I am his I will make him happy, if it is in the power of mortal woman to do it.'

A soft, low tap came at the door—so soft and low that Vanessa flung back her hair and stood listening, half doubting whether she had really heard it.

It came again, gentle and guarded, as though the person who knocked did not wish to wake her if she should be sleeping; and Vanessa answered, 'Come in!' and glanced round—moved to wonder what the hour might be. It seemed like half a lifetime since she had said good-night to Winifred, but the shadows were only just beginning to turn thinner and greyer, giving promise of the early summer dawn.

It was Winifred who entered, with a candle in her hand, and her appearance was rather startling, at an hour that was practically the middle of the night.

She wore a grey dress that Vanessa had never seen before—a plain grey dress with linen cuffs and collar, that suggested a nurse's uniform, or at any rate the garb of a woman who has special work to do and is fitly dressed for it. Her masses of red hair were brushed smooth, and gathered into a firm knot, and her eyes were shining with what looked like terror dominated by courage and firm resolve.

'Vane!' she said, 'I guessed that I should find you awake. Did you know too that there is something going on to-night?'

"No! What is going on? Is any one ill?" cried Vanessa, coming suddenly back to the present with the prompt energy of one who had known what it was to have to cope with the emergencies of illness or accident almost single-handed.

'I don't know *what* it is, I thought perhaps you might help me to guess. Your cousin is out, of course—that means nothing—but his man is gone too, and every manservant about the place. The maids were frightened, they made a fuss about the house being left so unprotected, till Mrs. Welby scolded them and ordered them all off to bed. But Mrs. Vaughan's maid is nervous at something Mr. Vaughan said to her, and she is sitting up in the ante-room, keeping watch.'

‘What was it that he said?’

‘I can’t quite make out, she is not very clear. Something about not letting Mrs. Vaughan be alarmed by reports; but why should he say that unless there were likely to be reports to alarm her?’

‘Can they all be gone to hunt poachers?’ asked Vanessa, drawing upon her recollections of the novels from which she had gained almost all her knowledge of English country life.

‘Not in July! There could be no poaching now that would need a strong force to put it down. But there is mischief on foot somewhere.’

‘Then it is something to do with the navvies, those lambs of Mr. Kenyon’s that he is so fond of! I know Redmond has been falling out with them, and they with him; and now I suppose he is going to put a stop to some of their doings.’

‘Yes, with the few men that an estate like this can muster—to meddle with a hornet’s nest of over two hundred!’

‘I wish he would not meddle with them. But I cannot think that they would mean serious harm—those men who were so chivalrous to us in their own rough way.’

‘Ay, to *us*. But they are not all like those we know.’

‘Mr. Kenyon will be able to deal with them, perhaps—if he knows about it.’

‘Oh, he will know about it! Could you suppose that anything exciting could take place in the county and he not be in the thick of it?’

Both girls laughed a little, in an excited fashion, and Winifred went over to the window, and stood there looking vaguely out into the dimness.

‘He will certainly interfere,’ she said. ‘But he may not be able to do anything but get himself into danger as well as the rest, which is just what he will like! . . . Oh! Vane, if we were only men, you and I, and could go out and get ourselves into danger too!’

Vanessa’s mind had not yet admitted the possibility of danger, and perhaps she could not help being aware that Redmond much preferred her as she was, while Winifred would have been humbly thankful to have been merely good comrade to the man of whose danger *she* was thinking. She went on looking out of the window, and listened with her soul in her ears to the baffling half-noises of the early dawn; while

Vanessa clasped a belt round the loose folds of her white wrapper, and swept the cloud of her hair into a great knot and fastened it with long silver pins.

'Tell me,' said Vanessa at last, 'what kind of danger you are thinking of? What do you expect?'

'I have no reason to expect anything. But these are rough, powerful men, with all their passions very near the surface. If they should come to blows, *some one* is pretty sure to be seriously hurt. And if any of his party are hurt, your cousin, with his feudal ideas, will certainly insist on bringing them here to be cared for. In that case—I went through a year's training as a nurse once—I need not be altogether useless.'

She spoke with a curious sort of abstracted eagerness, as if absorbed in listening; and Vanessa glanced at her for a moment, before she too drew near to the window and took up her watch, and they listened as though the birds that were just beginning to break from sleepy twittering into song could tell them what was happening, or had happened, beyond the trees whose heavy summer foliage everywhere bounded their horizon.

Fine mist-wreaths lay along the grass, and grew thinner each moment as they looked—the grey of the sky grew bluer and the grey of the earth greener—the garden beds flushed into colour. The world was losing its night aspect, that strange secretive look that Nature bears when we take her as it were at unawares when all her human family should be sleeping.

The peaceful everyday scene somehow intensified Winifred's impatience, and made it seem impossible to wait there in ignorance.

'Vane,' she said, 'we shall neither hear nor see anything at this side of the house. Let us go out and reconnoitre. One can see at a glance for half a mile along either of the drives, and we can slip away by the shrubbery paths without being seen.'

Vanessa did not answer, but she put on a pair of thicker shoes, and flung a white Chuddah shawl round her head and shoulders, and arm in arm the two girls slipped through the silent house and out into the cool freshness of the early morning.

They went in silence, for neither wished to insist on the possibility of what they feared, or had the heart to deny it. Winifred Marlowe had great power of self-control, and as for

Vanessa, when all was well she might chatter like a woman of the West, but in the great crises of life she reverted to the instincts of another race and was watchful and almost dumb.

From the garden at the side of the Hall the carriage-drive could be seen at intervals all the way down to the gate at the outer lodge. A few minutes' watching showed them that there was nothing stirring throughout its length; and like a grey ghost and a white one they flitted back into the shrubbery, where something of the dusk of night was lingering still.

Beyond the shrubbery, at the back of the house, the other drive cut straight through the fir plantation, and here they paused, still saying no word, but just touching each other as if for sympathy, and looking up the shadowy vista of the long, straight road beneath the firs.

'How foolish we are!' said Vanessa presently, with a little quiver in her voice. 'I feel that they will never come while we keep looking, if we stand here all day. But if I were to turn my eyes away from that opening for a moment——'

'Hush!' said Winifred, lifting her hand, and as they both stood silent they heard the sound of heavy footsteps, nearer to them than the end of the drive that they had been watching, and the next instant they could distinguish voices, or rather one voice speaking in low and guarded tones.

The steps were drawing nearer, along the cart-track which came into the drive about twenty yards above where they were standing. They drew back a little among the trees, ready to be gone before any one should see them; but the first glimpse of the procession checked them, as if both had been turned to stone.

Six men were carrying a hurdle which was spread with their coats. On it lay something very straight and still, with covered face, and beside it trotted slowly a little grey dog, looking up wistfully every moment. As the bearers came out into the wider drive the breeze that had just sprung up in readiness for the sunrising caught a corner of the handkerchief and swept it lightly off the face that it had screened from the broadening daylight. Vanessa's hand closed over Winifred's with a force of which no one could have supposed those slender bones capable; but Winifred hardly felt the grasp. Their eyes told them both the same story, but if they had been compelled to speak they would both have denied the possibility of what they

saw. In such moments the bodily senses accept the ghastly certainty, but the soul holds out a little longer, obstinately refusing to believe.

And before Vanessa's horror-stricken soul had accepted the witness of her eyes the men had paused an instant with their burden, and Redmond himself had come forward and had lifted the handkerchief from the grass and replaced it, with a reverent gesture, over the face that was so bewilderingly, so terribly like his own.

Winifred heard the quick catch in the other girl's breath as her pulses stopped an instant and then raced on at double speed, but she did not look round, or move, except to put an arm round the slim waist and draw her companion near enough to lean a little upon her own more sturdy strength.

There was nothing for them to do, no place even for their sympathy; but neither could move just then, and no one turned or saw them. The men were moving on down the drive towards the house, but Redmond waited and looked back as if watching, and in the cold light of early morning Vanessa saw that his face looked ten years older than it had done the day before.

The next instant another group had come in sight—another hurdle—and those who bore it stepped even more carefully, each man looking to see where he set his feet, with the anxious, clumsy solicitude of those to whom this work was altogether new. It was by this that Vanessa knew that these carried the living, not the dead, though the uncovered face that rested against a pile of dark clothing looked even more deathlike than that from which the wind had lifted the handkerchief a moment ago.

'I knew it!' whispered Winifred under her breath, and Vanessa, beginning to realise her own relief, glanced round—and knew the secret that her companion had as yet hardly owned to herself.

The procession passed on, silent and ghostlike, over the moss-grown drive, and Vanessa drew herself from the arm that still held her, perhaps unconsciously.

'Come!' she said. 'By this path we can be in the house before they are. We must call up Mrs. Welby, and there may be something that we can do.'

As she spoke the new look that she had seen for a moment in her friend's eyes vanished: Winifred was herself again,

composed, watchful, alert ; all the more ready to be of use because she was looked upon merely as a spectator. But perhaps, as they sped back to the house together, it was not the least bitter drop in the plain girl's bitter cup that she had no right to grieve as Vanessa might have grieved without shame if it had been her cousin who lay in mortal peril.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HAPPY DEAD.

' Silently leave him
His battles are done ;
Heaven receive him
His rest is begun.

' His rest is begun,
Then why should we grieve him,
He has fought—he has won !
Silently leave him.'

T. Hood.

IT seemed as though Fate had determined to drive home Vanessa's newly learnt lesson of humility, for on this day, on which she had once resolved to yield herself to the man who loved her, it was quite impossible to suppose that her love was a matter of paramount importance to him.

To Redmond, with Valentine Elliot lying dead beneath his roof, and Arthur Kenyon in serious danger—and both death and danger, as it seemed to him, of his bringing about—nothing connected with his own happiness seemed of any vital consequence.

He had never had any hope of Vanessa's love, and if it had been offered to him now he would gladly have given it up, had the bargain been possible, to bring back to life the man who had loved him and had died for him. Life and time might alter his estimate, but just now woman's love went for little with one who had known friendship, like that of old, 'passing the love of women,' and who had for the first time to bear remorse.

It is hardly possible for poor humanity not to judge by results, at any rate on this crooked hither-side of the grave, and Redmond saw his own conduct in a very different light from that in which it had appeared to him when he planned his boyish campaign four and twenty hours before.

It seemed to him now that he had risked men's lives, and had sacrificed perhaps more than one, for a folly, a whim, to

gratify his own pride and obstinacy ; and to him the thought was even more intolerable than it would have been to the average man. For the very reason that his own life had been spoiled he had been resolute to spoil no other life, and the resolve had been a support and consolation to him ; but now to his repentant self-scorn it seemed that he had only been good lord to his people so long as no desire of his own prompted him to sacrifice them.

Besides the stunned feeling of great and deserved calamity there was the pressure of immediate anxiety, and a great deal to be done and thought of, in which Redmond felt himself sorely hampered by his want of knowledge of ordinary life.

He turned to Vanessa and her friend in desperate confession of his own helplessness, and they put aside their own private feelings, as women must and can, to help and to advise him in his surface perplexities, with an intense, unspoken pity for the deeper trouble of which he did not speak.

By Vanessa's advice Redmond sent a telegram to desire his legal adviser to come and see him through the inquiries that would be made into the night's somewhat lawless proceedings. By the doctor's directions a trained nurse had already been sent for, and until she could arrive Winifred was in charge of the sick-room, carrying out the doctor's orders with quiet precision—one-half of her being all alert and watchful, and the other stunned into a sort of apathy.

As to Arthur Kenyon's state, the doctor said little, being one of the reticent order, and no one pressed him to be explicit, gathering his opinion from his strenuous injunctions as to the need of absolute quiet. The bullet, in his opinion, had grazed the right lung and passing beyond had lodged where it might be extracted without much risk as soon as there should be a favourable opportunity.

Meanwhile there was the certainty of more or less of fever and pneumonia, consequent on the injury and subsequent exertion, to be tided over somehow, by care and patience.

He did not say that the patient's chances might be forfeited by any more imprudence, but Winifred knew, or thought she knew, the meaning of his manner, and of the treatment that he prescribed with such impressive particularity.

She fancied that Arthur was only partially conscious, after the long, exhausting transit from the scene of the fight ; but he either did not want to speak or was aware that he was strictly

forbidden to do so, and as long as he was quiescent all was so far well.

Meanwhile, by Redmond's orders, the windows were shrouded as they might have been if the master of the house lay dead ; and in the stately 'brocade room,' where his grandfather had died, lay what had been Valentine Elliot ; and at his feet the little grey dog Snip, his one keen eye tolerant but watchful.

Here came presently the tramp of several feet, and the hushed, gruff tones of men whose sturdy voices were subdued for the occasion, and here came Redmond once and again that day, between his anxious visits to the door of Arthur Kenyon's room and his brief, reluctant interviews with all the functionaries who found it necessary to speak with him. And here, as the afternoon wore to evening, came Vanessa, silent-footed and ghostlike, with cheeks almost as pale as her white gown, and in her hand a great wreath of lilies, white and flame-coloured.

She laid the wreath where the sheet lay in monumental folds above the crossed hands, then turned it softly down from the face and stood there looking, almost as motionless herself as the dead.

Vanessa was trying to make her fancy play her again the trick that it had played that morning ; to picture that marred face in place of the chiselled faultlessness of this that lay rigid before her ; that she might feel again the thrill of gladness that assured her that it was but fancy.

But keener than any joy and relief of her own was the perception of what must be in Redmond's mind when he stood there. With what despairing envy must he look upon that strong right hand lying pulseless and still, upon that beautiful face, more beautiful than ever now with the look that nothing can give but '*Death at the heart, with the heart's desire.*'

'He would change places, if he could !' she thought, and her heart ached with the thought of young life and manhood crouching, like a beggar repulsed, before the gates of Death. Ached too with the longing to give comfort, with that half motherly kindness that is a part of every good woman's love for her lover, and with regret that in this darkest hour he could not know what she herself had only just discovered.

'He thinks he is alone,' she said to herself. 'Would it comfort him to know that he is in my heart of hearts, and that

every sorrow of his is more mine than any trouble of my own ever was? . . . Will it comfort him when I give myself to him, body and soul? when I ask him, as I must and will if he will not ask me again, to take me and keep me for ever? . . . Did I ever think it too much to give up the world for his sake? It is too little, so little that I shall never count it worth his remembering! . . . But if ever woman's love contented man he shall be content some day!'

Her bosom heaved, her pale cheeks glowed for an instant, her eyes flashed through the deep swimming lustre of unshed tears. All her lithe, dark beauty thrilled into passionate life and yet the look upon her face was strangely akin to that ineffable peace and triumph of the face that lay before her.

The door, which she had left unlatched, fell softly open, and Redmond stood upon the threshold.

His eyes flashed as they caught sight of her and then his look fell upon the bed, and came slowly back to her, with all its fire quenched. He looked again at the wreath, and guessed how it came there; and very quietly took in his the cold, slender hand that had woven it, and lifted it to his lips.

'Thank you,' he said, simply and earnestly; and they stood side by side for a moment in silence; and for once, for that brief space, a pair of young lovers forgot themselves—almost forgot each other.

'Tell me about him,' said Vanessa softly at last, and Redmond told, speaking in that level, inward voice that tells of utter weariness both of mind and body, and yet as though it was a relief to him to speak, as indeed she had divined that it would be.

With a brevity and sad simplicity that left no room for embarrassment, he told of that past wrong-doing that had set Valentine Elliot's life awry, as it had done the short, sad life of the mother who bore him.

And so on, from the time when they had fought their way through a kind of repulsion to an affection that played at opposition and defiance, till now, when the man who had been wronged before he was born had laid down his life for the friend whom he might have counted a foe.

Redmond left the tale as it ended, without comment or reflection. He said nothing of himself or of his regret and remorse, even as he had said no more than was needful to make the story intelligible, of how he for his part had more than once befriended Valentine.

Vanessa guessed at much of what was left unsaid, perhaps because the life that she had led had taught her more of the feelings of men for men than comes within the knowledge of many women.

It had fallen to her lot before now to have to try to comfort a man who had come out of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, leaving behind the friend who had been closer than a brother—a man who believed that for his life had been paid a price so heavy that the thought of it must shadow all his days to come.

It was not the trouble that was new—the quiver in the deep voice, the significant pauses, the passion breaking through reserve—it was her own sharing of it, the something far deeper than mere pity and kindness that made her heart throb and her lips be dumb.

‘He is so happy!’ she said at last, with a lingering, almost envious intonation.

‘I am not doubting *that*,’ Redmond answered slowly.

‘But you must think more of it—always think of it. He gave what he wanted to give; his sacrifice was accepted; he has the better part. Yours is the harder, since you have to *take*! You will forgive yourself for being alive, when you remember that.’

‘*Forgive myself*. It is the right word! But that will not be yet, if ever.’

‘It will be as soon as you understand—as soon as you realise what he has won, and how well content he is with it. *I* did not realise it—till—yesterday. It is more blessed to give than to receive—to give one’s life—in one sense—in one way or another of giving. The harder part is to receive the sacrifice—to take what is given—but you can do it—if you do not grudge the happiness to—the giver.’

The words came broken with little breathless pauses, because Vanessa’s heart beat so fast that she could not quite steady her voice.

She was pleading for herself as well as for Valentine Elliot, and some womanly instinct of reticence would not let her speak more plainly, or raise her eyes from where they rested on the wreath of lilies. But Redmond turned a little and looked at her in vague wonder.

This was, and was not, the queen of his adoration, this creature so much gentler, softer, so infinitely more adorable.

What did it mean? Was it only the dead to whom he was not to grudge the happiness of giving?

A thrill of amazed, incredulous hope crept over him, checked almost instantly by the recollection of the time and the place, but coming back again like the sweep of an advancing tide. What he was going to say he never knew, but his lips were open to speak when a soft, cautious tread came along the passage and paused outside the half-open door.

'Is Mr. Vaughan there?' said the lowered, respectful voice of his man Allen, and as Redmond answered curtly 'Yes,' it went on, 'Some one to see you, sir, on important business. I showed him into the library.'

Redmond drew a long breath, made a step towards the door, then shut it and came back to where Vanessa stood motionless.

'You are right,' he said. 'It is the harder part, and yet so easy—too easy. I can't think, I daren't think—yet. But however it is—God bless you for ever, for——'

He did not try to finish the sentence, but went away, shutting the door again behind him. And Snip crawled to the side of the bed where Vanessa stood, and reared himself up to lick her hand.

* * * * *

It was perhaps rather in Arthur Kenyon's favour just then that he felt an absolute indifference as to what was to be the result of Waterlow's pistol-shot. Theoretically, and considering all things, he did not at all want to live, but by constitution he was too full of life and too much in love with it not to let Nature fight her hardest for him.

So he lay still and let that go as it would, and in the intervals of consciousness between sleeping and waking, between life and death, he considered the beautiful, awful certainty that had come to him there in the dark, midnight field.

He had only spoken once since he had been brought down to the Hall, and then it was, with pain and peril, to whisper an inquiry after Waterlow. Redmond told him that the young man had only been stunned and now was little the worse for the night's doings; and he had closed his eyes and asked no more. They had not told him that Valentine was dead, and he did not need to ask. It seemed to him that they had been part of the way together, and then—just as the mist and the

darkness began to thin and brighten—Something, some Hand gentle and irresistible, had parted them, and had brought him back to common day again.

It was not for him to grieve for Valentine, and as for himself, if that Hand was really there—and there were moments when he seemed to feel the touch of It yet—he was too weak to reason out what life and work would be like in that case, but they would not at least be unendurable.

He was unexpectedly patient and amenable therefore, and the hours went by in a dreamlike procession of daylight tempered by green sunblinds, and mellow lamplight, and faces came and went that he was generally able to recognise, though he did not trouble himself to wonder how they came there, or to compute time correctly.

Quite as soon as the doctor had expected he was able to bear the extraction of the bullet, which happened to be not a very difficult matter; and the injury to the lung progressed towards healing in a way that was, on the whole, satisfactory to doctor and nurses as well.

There was the trained nurse, a sensible, capable, awe-inspiring, middle-aged woman, and there was Winifred, who replaced her while she slept or took her stated two hours of fresh air and exercise, and there was Redmond, who, as far as his one hand would serve, was as good a nurse as either, and Vanessa, who supplemented everybody, and in her grand princess-like way was a very practical and useful person.

They took excellent care of Arthur among them, and he perceived it, and felt that it would be ungrateful and inconsiderate to die after it all. And by and by, as he grew stronger, his indomitable spirit revived a good deal; and though he was still absolutely forbidden to talk, his nurses were not debarred from speaking to him, and his eyes could and did say a good deal in return.

The day after the catastrophe Vanessa had bethought herself that Arthur's friends ought to be communicated with, and there had been a momentary uncertainty as to how to find them. He had said very little about himself and his own relations, though much about other people's, and none of them had ever liked to question him: while now, of course, he could not be questioned at all. But Winifred knew enough to direct them to the thirty-years' old 'Baronetage' in the library—unopened for the greater part of that time—and there they

found the name of Arthur's father, and of the elder brother whom they guessed to be now the owner of title and estate.

They wrote to him, but rather to their surprise no one came in response to Redmond's invitation, only Lady Kenyon wrote in evident distress and anxiety, saying that her husband was prevented from travelling just then, and begging for a letter every day and a telegram if there should be any fresh cause for apprehension.

Vanessa wrote every day, and for Redmond's sake put as good a face on the matter as she could. Lady Kenyon's messages to Arthur were read to him, and listened to with an odd little sympathetic smile, and if he was surprised that his brother did not come to see him at any rate he did not seem to regret it.

He was decidedly better and stronger when one day there arrived a letter with the Kenyon crest and stamp, but not in Lady Kenyon's handwriting, and directed not to Vanessa, but to Arthur himself.

Winifred thought it best to consult the doctor as to whether Arthur should be allowed to have this, and the doctor, after a little hesitation, decided that they might risk giving it to him. He could bear the trifling exertion of reading, though he must not speak, and it would be rather a strong measure to keep from him what was presumably a family letter, written by some one who knew the state of his health.

And this is what Arthur addressed himself to read, recognising his brother's handwriting, and prepared with a little lazy amusement to encounter a dull and well-meant reproof for having got himself into a plight unbecoming his profession.

'KENYON COURT,

'August 2, 18—

'MY DEAR ARTHUR,—I have to write to you in connection with a probable—I may say now, certain—event, of the likelihood of which you ought perhaps to have been informed sooner. You will recognise, I am sure, that there are some contingencies of which it seems undesirable to speak until they are, humanly speaking, no longer doubtful ; so without further apology I will go on to explain the circumstances which compel me now to write to you. A few weeks ago, some symptoms of which I had been aware for some time, induced me to visit a London physician, and though evidently thinking

seriously of them he declined to speak decidedly until some time should have elapsed, and he should have seen me again. I visited him last week, and he took another opinion, which coincides, it appears, with his own. His verdict was most cautiously and considerately given, but I convinced him that I should prefer to know the truth, and the result of his further investigations is that he thinks it unlikely that my life can be prolonged more than six months. He admits that there may be considerable suffering, which I trust that I—and my poor wife for me—may be strengthened to bear. But that is a detail of minor importance, though I know that your kindness of heart will lead you to feel for me and for poor Frances, and to desire that we may be spared as far as possible. My motive in writing, however, is to ascertain your views as to the future. Had we been blessed with a son, my death would, of course, have made no difference to your prospects, but as things are you are my heir. In your profession and under existing circumstances, it seems to me probable that you may prefer to ignore the title as far as possible, and not to reside at Kenyon Court. But in that case it seems unfair that you should be encumbered with a place which, either let or unlet, would be a perpetual trouble to you. When I am gone George Mulgrave Kenyon, our cousin, is, as you know, next in the entail, and as long as you are unmarried it is impossible that he would consent to any arrangement that might lessen his chance of succeeding. But if you approve of the idea, we might join in cutting off the entail, and Kenyon Court might then be disposed of according to our wishes. The estate would realise a sum which—after Frances's jointure has been paid—would be sufficient to give you freedom and independence, and possibly to enable you to find a wider sphere for yourself in some newer country. Think over my proposal, and if you can spare time to come over I shall be very glad to see you. But in any case think this over, and believe that I do not wish to press you to adopt any course that you do not feel will be most for your own happiness. If you do not wish the estate to be sold, regard this merely as a suggestion, the refusal of which will leave things simply as they were.

‘Believe me,

‘Your affectionate brother,

‘ROBERT KENYON.’

It took Arthur some time to read this letter, and as soon as he had finished it he took a moment to clear his dazed eyes and steady his bewildered brain, and began it again. It was so unlike what he had expected that at first he could not grasp its meaning, and when this began to dawn upon him it shook him with emotions that would have been stronger if he had not been so weak, but which were a good deal too strong for him to bear with safety.

He did not notice that Robert had somehow not heard what had happened to him—the news indeed having been carefully kept back by Lady Kenyon, lest her husband should be agitated on the occasion of his second visit to the physician, and his letter having been written and sent without her knowledge.

The first thing that Arthur realised was that Robert's life was in danger, and though they had never been to each other what brothers sometimes are, yet the tie of blood was strong, and the news seemed unbelievable, even while it filled his soul with a confused sense of trouble and loneliness. But as he read on, that grief was merged in a deeper one, and in a burning sense of wrong. Arthur had never felt that his brother had really believed in him, or had backed him up in any thorough and satisfactory fashion. But he had always known that Robert was rather a cold and unresponsive person, who would safeguard his assurances and qualify his statements till they were of little comfort to anybody.

Now—now, however, he seemed to have before him in black and white the confession that his brother believed him to be really disgraced and shamed past rehabilitation—that Robert would rather that he did not bear their father's title among their father's old friends, or ever live beneath the roof upon which he had brought discredit.

In point of fact that was not at all Sir Robert's meaning. He had never really thought that Arthur had done wrong, but it had always seemed to him that there was more fuss made over the young man's talents than those talents were any warrant for, and it had all ended in a muddle and a fiasco out of which his somewhat slow wits could see no possible way of escape. Now, with his heart softened by his own situation, he honestly wished Arthur to do what would be least painful to himself; though perhaps it was no wonder if his stately and formal phraseology sounded to Arthur like a guarded assump

tion of his guilt and a demand that some sacrifice should be made to the family honour.

If the news of his own probable succession had been simply broken to Arthur without any further suggestion, one of his first feelings would have been that he could never bear to call himself Sir Arthur, or to live among the old friends of the family. But now that it seemed to be demanded of him that he should hide himself in disgrace, he raged secretly and ineffectually against the proposal, and vowed to himself at first that he would do no such thing. And yet, Robert was so little older than Arthur, that the younger brother had never been accustomed to consider himself as the heir. If poor Robert was really to die before his time it seemed to be his right to say what was to be done with the estate that he had ruled and improved so carefully, and to him too Arthur could well believe that it was bitter to propose that the place should be sold, and that there should be Kenyons at Kenyon Court no more. He would never have proposed it unless it had been very evident to his dull, conscientious soul that it would be for the best. No! it must be done, should be done, if Robert wished it, though it was the seal set to Arthur's disgrace.

It was the trained nurse who was sitting in the room while Arthur read his letter, and what she observed convinced her that it had been a mistake to let him have it. But it was too late now to interfere, and when by and by he signified to her that he wanted paper and pencil, she had wit enough to see that he could not be opposed without a contest that would do him more harm than any reasonable amount of writing.

After all, she had hardly time to grow anxious lest he should be doing too much, for he merely scribbled three lines in a hand which excitement made nearly as steady as usual.

'Grieved to hear your news. It shall be as you will. I will come to you as soon as I can.—ARTHUR.'

He folded it, scribbled his brother's name on the outside, and handed it to the nurse to be addressed and sent off, having reached the limit of his strength.

But though he did not try or wish to do anything more at present, his thoughts would not let him rest. As his body lay in that enforced silence and stillness his soul was tossed perpetually from heights of scorn to depths of despondency, alternately burning with wrath and chilled with loneliness.

It was no wonder if the doctor, when he came again, demanded indignantly to know what the patient had been doing ; and then, remembering the letter, held his peace somewhat suddenly.

If he blamed himself he did not say so, but it was evident that he felt that mischief had been done, and so it proved. The fever in Arthur's thoughts soon made his pulses feverish, and fever of mind and body together burned away the little strength that he had regained since his wound began to heal.

The doctor looked grave, and Redmond and Winifred almost gave way to despair when presently their patient lost control over his thoughts, and mind and speech began again to wander ; and yet, if they had known all, it was by no means the worst thing that could have happened to him.

As long as he was in any sense himself the thought of his wounded honour, and the kind of insult that Robert seemed to have offered to him, was incessantly rankling in his mind like a poisoned arrow. But strangely enough, as soon as consciousness went, the memory of all that dropped away, like the recollection of an evil dream, and he was at Cross Rigg again, dreaming of Lesley, and sometimes of Valentine.

And because it was of Lesley that he was thinking some instinct, even in delirium, kept him almost silent. Only now and then, between sleeping and waking, her name passed his lips, and no one noticed it but Winifred, and perhaps she would not have known the meaning of the tone in which it was uttered but for the secret of her own heart.

Winifred knew to whom the name belonged, because in the evening of the day on which it had all happened she had been the one who was called to Mrs. Welby's room to answer the inquiries of 'a young woman who had come down from Cross Rigg to ask after Mr. Kenyon.'

Directly they looked into each other's eyes Winifred had guessed why the other could not be content with such account as the servants could have given her, though Lesley was quite quiet and self-controlled.

And when Arthur unconsciously spoke her name, it seemed to her that she knew the rest of the story.

She saw, as he had seen, how natural and obvious, and from one point of view how reasonable it was : that he who had fallen from his own rank should find consolation in that below

it ; how this girl who looked and spoke and perhaps thought as a lady—and who yet would never comprehend too well what had happened to him—might seem to have been created to be that consolation.

And yet—and yet—it would be the consummation of his ruin. What would once have been accepted as a pardonable eccentricity would be taken now as a final degradation, a proof that he had reconciled himself to a lot that he deserved.

Winifred put herself on one side, as some women can—especially when they have never been deluded with false hopes by themselves or any one else ; but looking at it ever so dispassionately she could not see much brightness in the prospect. One thing she could do, though, which showed perhaps some largeness of mind, for she arranged quietly and as a matter of course that Lesley should have news every day up at Cross Rigg, recognising at once the keenness of the girl's suspense and the intense dislike that Arthur would have felt to the idea of her having constantly to confront the servants at the back door of the Hall, in making her own inquiries.

All immediate danger from the effect of the pistol-shot had passed away before Arthur had begun at all to recover from the blow of his brother's letter, but at last his strong vitality reasserted itself, the kind of low fever that had prostrated him smouldered gradually away ; and he could not help feeling the pulse of returning life and strength—in spite of a depression that kept him unusually silent even after he had leave to speak.

Half sullenly he accepted the fact that he was not to get out of the tangle so easily as he had once hoped. This new trouble, or rather the fresh sting of the old trouble, had marred the kind of solemn peace and gladness that he had brought out of that dark hour of need and of danger ; but it could not take away the sense of duty and obligation, and as he lay silent and helpless he meditated deeply upon what he was to make of life. It would be bearable if he could do some good with it ; and Valentine's friendship—the agony of having no response to make to Valentine's dying appeal—had taught him what lines the endeavour must take. He must learn that he might teach ; press on that he might lead. And all the gifts that had once seemed likely to carve out for him a distinguished niche in the world—even the money by which poor Robert thought to bribe him to give up his name and his home—all might be means to that great end.

But first of all there was Lesley.

Of his own feeling for her he was sure enough by this time, but also he knew well enough that as things were not even the possession of her would suffice for happiness. It would be an alleviation, which it was a sort of confession of weakness to desire; and on the other hand, from her point of view, was it fair to take her young life to stop in part the gaps that Fate had made in a ruined career?

Manifestly, it all depended upon Lesley's point of view. And perhaps it would not have been easy to Arthur to believe that he could not have made her care for him if he had tried; but then he had been so careful *not* to try! Had he done anything which he had not tried to do? His own feeling had a claim upon him which it might or might not be well to ignore; but was there any feeling of hers that ought not to be ignored?

He thought it over again and yet again, revolving in his mind every recollection, every hint that might be gathered from word or look or significant silence; and in his weakness and weariness he could neither come to any definite resolve nor be content without doing so.

And so it came to pass that he felt an impulse towards asking counsel and advice that would never have moved him at a time when he had himself more under control.

It was in Winifred that he felt moved to place a half confidence. He had always looked upon her as a good comrade, with a woman's intuition and a woman's quick sympathy, and without the beauty and the passion that sometimes make a woman a dangerous confidante. And as a nurse she ruled him wisely and well, knowing when to tyrannise and when to give way, and he was very affectionately grateful to her.

And so it happened that one evening, when the long summer twilight was almost over and the lamp had not yet been brought on—when Winifred's well-shaped head was a dark silhouette against the window and neither could see the other's face—Arthur, not having at all resolved to speak, suddenly found himself putting what purported to be an imaginary case, and telling his own story.

CHAPTER XX.

INTERVIEWS.

IN the soft, dull light of a cloudy August afternoon Winifred was walking alone up the winding sandy road towards Cross Rigg. She was doing something of the wisdom of which she was but half convinced, something that she had by no means definitely resolved to do ; but though her soul hesitated her feet did not, and while her thoughts swayed from resolve to doubt and back again, she moved steadily on as if led by some impulse from without.

When Arthur had put his case to Winifred, she had known of course perfectly well that it was of himself that he was speaking, and he knew that she knew it. Only it was a little easier for both of them to speak in a vague, impersonal fashion, as of third parties who were not to be named.

And when Arthur spoke with quiet bitterness of the shame of asking any woman to share disgrace and loneliness, Winifred clenched her hands tightly together and held back her passionate protest. '*One woman at least would find it honour and bliss !*' she would have said, if she had spoken the very thought of her inmost soul, but she was not of the kind that speaks out unasked. She let Arthur go on, and describe the loneliness—the dreary lot—of the girl on whom his heart yearned ; and if her own heart cried out, '*And am I not lonely too ?*' she hushed it down.

It came to this, as far as she could understand him, as far as Arthur could understand himself : that he was too proud to catch at the obvious solace of a beautiful and loving wife—too proud to own that he feared the perils from which perhaps only such close, tender, human companionship might save him. And to his fastidious soul it seemed an insult to Lesley that, because she had not been born in his own rank in life, he should offer her a name that he would not have dared to offer to one who was, technically speaking, 'a lady.'

But, on the other hand, her present position was neither happy nor particularly safe ; and it was—just possible—that she cared more—

Winifred could have made short work of what seemed to her fantastic scruples as to asking a woman to bear a dishonoured

name ; but she was silent on that point, perhaps for fear of saying too much. She felt that it was very possible that Lesley cared, and to her also it seemed that that made all the difference.

If she cared, then the post of honour and of happiness was hers by right. Would she claim it, or was it the duty of a sister-woman—one whose insight, dearly bought, showed her both points of view—to claim it for her ?

Winifred hardly answered ; while Arthur musingly stated and restated his 'case,' she was trying to recall her one glimpse of Lesley's face, and what she had fancied that she read there.

And then, before more had been said, some one came in with a lamp, and in a few minutes Redmond followed, and Winifred went away, half relieved to know that at least she could say no more at present.

She knew that it was very likely that, the mood having passed, Arthur would never mention the subject again, but he had said enough to give her the right to speak if she should feel that she had anything to say, and it might be that he, who was ordinarily so self-reliant, would feel that in this case a woman's judgment was more to be trusted than his own.

More and more she felt impelled to see Lesley again, and so learn a little more about the matter, whether she ever took upon herself to advise or not.

It was quite simple and natural that she should recognise the Elliots' interest in their late lodger ; that she should go and see them and let them know that Arthur might now be fairly regarded as convalescent. Nothing more intimate or important need be said unless it came of itself ; and so Winifred turned her steps towards Cross Rigg, even while hardly admitting to herself why she went.

Winifred was very honest with herself in one respect. She quite recognised that she at any rate had no right to feel herself of a different clay from Lesley Sherwin. Her own grandfather had been in much the same position as Lesley's, and had been not much better educated. Her father had made money, and—what was of more importance to his daughter—had been thrown among intellectual and cultivated people. He had not only left his only daughter enough money to live upon, but he had given her the best education that wealth could pay for. But she had not forgotten the pit from which she had been digged ;

she knew on the one hand her own homely progenitors, and on the other the aristocracy of intellect, of whom in her quiet way she felt herself the equal ; and it did not seem to her that there was any gulf between them that could not be bridged. To her then the whole matter seemed to hinge upon what Lesley felt and was ; no duty to the Kenyons or their connections weighed at all upon her mind.

Cross Rigg looked very lonely and quiet on that August afternoon, with its air of being not only a few miles removed from the busy hum of men, but a generation or a world apart from modern life and modern interests.

Lesley's eyes—clear hazel, darkened by their long, dark lashes—flashed wide when she opened the door and saw Winifred standing there. But she did not ask or look any question, and Winifred forgot that her visit might seem to need some commonplace explanation. Silently she followed Lesley down the passage, into the room where Arthur's books and papers were all strewn about, just as he had left them. And as she took the chair Lesley offered her, and glanced round with wistful curiosity, she felt the pathos of this dim old-world place where that impatient spirit had read and thought and chafed and on the whole possessed itself with wonderful patience.

Lesley, for reasons of her own, was thinking of that scene in 'Pamela,' where 'Mr. B.'s sister descends upon the luckless little heroine, prepared, by force if necessary, to prevent the 'low-born creature' from daring to marry her brother. While Winifred, recognising the impossibility of sitting silent, was finding little courteous commonplaces to utter about the view from the garden and the prospects of the harvest, Lesley was half unconsciously moving about the room, laying the books in piles and the papers in the writing-case, doing away with that air of waiting for their owner to return that they had somehow kept during the past few anxious weeks. She was listening all the while to the new-comer's soft pleasant voice, and murmuring a courteous phrase of assent now and then—nowhere is the code of politeness more rigid than in the class in which Lesley had been brought up—and between whiles giving many a glance at her visitor's pale, clever face with its setting of dark-red hair. This was not much like the infuriated lady of title, to avoid whose energetic displeasure poor Pamela was obliged to jump out of the window !

Lesley slid her hand into the bosom of her dress, to give herself courage by the touch of a folded paper that lay there, and spoke with the desperate frankness that comes sometimes more easily towards a stranger than towards the oldest friend.

'Miss Marlowe,' she said, 'you have been very kind ; I shall always be grateful to you, all my life, for having taken the trouble to send every day to tell us how *he* was. And so, I wonder if you would be so good as to tell me what you think—about something ?'

'Surely ; of course I will,' answered Winifred in surprise.

'Mr. Kenyon told me how clever you were—how much you had learnt, and how many places you had been to. And I—I know nothing but what poor aunt taught me, and I see now that she was old-fashioned. And the books she gave me to read—perhaps they were old-fashioned too, and things are not really like that in the world now. But will you tell me what you think ? Would it be a very bad thing for a gentleman to marry a girl who was—was not his equal—some one who did not know the things that he knew ?'

She stood up straight and tall, and her eyes did not flinch. She did not flush, though the vivid, lovely crimson burned a little more deeply in her brown cheeks. Winifred's lips drew together a little. Difficult as the situation had appeared to her, she had not expected this—to be questioned, instead of being the questioner. Evidently Arthur Kenyon had gone farther than he had given her any hint of, or the girl's vanity had misled her—girls of that class no doubt were vain and easily misled—and she had taken that for granted which had only vaguely crossed his mind.

Winifred was truly generous ; she had proved it often in her dealings with women more favoured by nature than herself, but the ache in her heart hardened it now a little against the girl before her, as she realised that rare beauty of face and form—beauty of a quality that a clever woman appreciates perhaps more keenly than most men.

It was a little stiffly that she answered, after a momentary pause—

'I am not sure whether men care much that the women they marry should know the things that they know. But a wife has other things to do : to entertain her husband's friends ; to rule his servants ; to understand his world——'

Lesley looked wistfully round the low-ceiled, panelled

chamber, with those few books and papers for its only superfluities. She had never pictured the man of whom she was thinking in any home but this, and he had no friends that she was aware of.

'I always thought that he was poor,' she said. 'There might not be servants or a great house. But if he has friends, he would not like to vex them—and I suppose they might be vexed?'

'Very few people are absolutely at liberty to please themselves, without considering friends or relations; and no doubt a man's relations would prefer that he should not marry a—stranger,' said Winifred slowly; 'and sometimes when he begins to look through their eyes he sees things differently. But he should know his own business best, and be able to judge what would make him happy.'

'Yes; if he was thinking only of that,' answered Lesley, speaking half to herself; and for a moment she stood motionless, her eyelids lowered till the dark lashes almost touched her cheek.

'How still she is! how unself-conscious!' thought Winifred, watching her. 'If she had been a girl at college I should have said that *anything* might have been made of her. But she is not at college, and he cannot afford, in any sense, to educate a wife. I wonder if I have been very cruel? But I have said no more than the truth.'

Lesley lifted her eyes at last.

'I am very much obliged to you,' she said simply, and it was so evident that she had nothing more to ask that Winifred rose to go. In the older woman's heart a voice seemed suddenly to cry, '*Never heed a word that I have said! If you love him, and he loves you, what does all the rest matter?*' But she did not say it aloud. After all, she had spoken nothing that was not true; and to counsel this inexperienced creature to any action, or to give her any hopes, would be to incur a frightful responsibility.

Lesley conducted her to the door, with careful courtesy, and then went back into Arthur's sitting-room, and shut herself in there, and took out the paper that she had carried in her bosom.

She had received it by special messenger that morning. It was very short, and written in pencil, but very much to the point, being in fact the outcome of Arthur's meditations during

a sleepless night. In talking out the situation he had made it clear, at any rate to his own mind, and with characteristic promptitude he went on to act upon the resolve to which he had come.

'Damaged goods or not, it is her right to have the refusal of me, and she shall have it,' he thought, and from that moment could not rest until his letter was written.

And this was what he wrote :—

'MY DEAR LESLEY,—I hope before long to be able to come and see you, but in the meantime there is something that I want you to consider. I love you ; and if you could care for me enough to be my wife, you might help me to make the best of a life that I am afraid will always be a poor business. You understand, do you not ? how little I have to offer you—not even the honest name that any working man might offer. There is something against me of which, before God, I am innocent, but of which, most probably, I shall never be able to clear myself in this world. I love you very dearly, I want you very much ; but of that I hardly dare speak, lest I should seem to over-persuade you. Even to me it seems that you might do better with your beauty and your youth than to give them to one who has left *his* youth and most of his hopes behind him. What I want is that you should choose as will be most for your own happiness, and where that lies I shall know when I see you. I love you ; nothing can alter that, but the only question of importance is whether you love me ? You shall give me an answer to that when I see you.

'Yours ever,

'ARTHUR KENYON.'

Lesley knew the words by heart already, but she read them over once again, and folded the note and replaced it in her bosom. Her red lips were closely pressed together, and her eyes were dark with brooding thought. If Arthur had been there he might not have found it so easy as he supposed to read from her fair, girlish face the decision at which her heart had arrived.

Things had been going hardly with Redmond Vaughan, and yet, as so often happens, the new developments had not been so unendurable as he would have supposed, had any one foretold them to him.

He had been forced out into the world, into the light of day ; had had to meet hosts of inquiring, critical, more or less unfriendly eyes ; and he had had too much else to think of to realise it as so very much of an ordeal.

For one thing, Redmond had never had any nervous or hypochondriacal fancies, such as his mother's early management might easily have driven him into. He had only avoided the daylight-world because it was the world of men and women, and he had been taught instinctively to spare them the sight of himself as much as possible. When it was necessary, he felt that they must put up with seeing, as he must put up with being seen ; and during the days that had followed Valentine Elliot's death he was in no mood to consider his own feelings in such a matter, or those of any one else.

Redmond was compelled of course to be present at the inquest, where the coroner's jury brought in a verdict of manslaughter against the navvy who had struck the fatal blow—John Eaton, commonly known as Long Jack. If the blow had fallen to Redmond's share, as the man intended, the verdict might have been *wilful murder*, considering the threats that he had thrown out beforehand. But there were plenty to bear witness that Valentine had intercepted a stroke not meant for him ; and, murderer or homicide, the man had disappeared and seemed to have left no clue whereby he could be traced. It was not that his comrades were silent concerning him—they furnished any number of clues and any amount of information, but unfortunately none of it seemed to be of any avail in tracing him further than the next village, where the earth had apparently swallowed him.

The coroner, a young and not very experienced man, made some remarks, severe in intention, but somewhat faltering in tone, on Mr. Vaughan's conduct in having provoked the disturbance that had led to these disastrous occurrences, to which Redmond listened with grave and courteous attention. They did not hurt him at all, they were so much less severe than what he had been saying to himself every day and every hour since the thing took place. To some men the voice of that rather dull young man would have been terrible as representing public opinion, but Redmond had never sufficiently realised his neighbours to care much what they thought of him.

Arthur Kenyon, with the blood of generations of country gentlemen in his veins, could guess pretty well what the

neighbouring squires would be saying ; and half in fun and half in sympathy would have given a good deal to talk it over with some of them, and defend Redmond as much as possible. But that was out of the question, even if he had been able to leave the house ; and so far he had but once been allowed to leave his room, and then only as far as a sitting-room on the same floor. He felt as though he were in an enchanted garden, and had no means of knowing how time went outside, or how events appeared to those not under the spell. But what lay before him as soon as he should be strong enough to move was in part so painful, and in part so perplexing, that for once he was in no great hurry to meet it, and would rather have forgotten himself altogether in Redmond's affairs.

It was on the second afternoon on which he had been helped to the couch in the window of the upstairs sitting-room, that the outside world suddenly descended upon him somewhat after the fashion of a bombshell.

He was well enough now to be left alone when he wished it, and as he was lying in welcome solitude, Redmond's man, Allen, appeared at the door inquiring whether he felt equal to seeing an elderly gentleman who would not give his name, but wished to speak to him most particularly.

Curiosity alone would have made Arthur say yes, and none of his conjectures had suggested a probable name for his visitor, when presently Allen threw open the door, and there marched in a short, broad-shouldered, elderly man, with grey hair and a red, weather-beaten face, at the sight of which Arthur half started up.

'Don't move, Mr. Kenyon, don't move,' said the newcomer, and Arthur lay back again, having indeed little choice, for there were associations with that face and voice, of burning wrath and intolerable shame, that shook all the strength out of him.

'I'm sorry to see you still an invalid,' said Mr. Waterlow, senior, in a bluff, unmodulated voice. 'I wouldn't have troubled you with a visit, but there are things that I want to have settled ; and in the course of my life I have generally found it best to transact important business for myself, without third parties. So if you're equal to discussing the matter, I'll be glad to have it out at once.'

'I am quite equal to business, thank you,' said Arthur, with deliberation, and pointing his visitor to a chair. Mr. Waterlow took it, sitting with his knees very wide apart, and his hat dang-

ling between them, and staring at Arthur's colourless face and somewhat sunken blue eyes as though he were a delicate piece of machinery the strength of which he was trying to calculate.

'Well, Mr. Kenyon,' he began ponderously, 'I wish, in the first place, to say that I have always considered you a gentleman. I never believed a word of that cock-and-bull story that my boy Tom, who is a fool, was put up to tell by his cousin Theodore, who is a fool and a rogue as well. I don't profess to understand about examinations and such like, they're not in my line of business, but I take it that I know when a man is likely to carry out his contract, whatever it may be. And when I heard that some folks had taken it upon themselves to say that I had given you money to give Tom a shove in some way that wasn't according to regulations—why, I spoke my mind pretty freely.'

'I am much obliged to you,' said Arthur, and felt that he could not hate this man, whose rough sympathy was like a touch on an open wound.

'Not at all, not at all. I'm afraid my word wouldn't go for much with all your swells at college. But I come to you now as one gentleman to another, and I'm going to speak out. I'm not pleased with my son Tom—quite the contrary. Young men will be young men, and to take a drop too much is neither here nor there ; but business is business, and to be the worse for liquor on the works, and to set about handling the men when a chap isn't master of himself—why, it's the very deuce. I declare to you, Mr. Kenyon, if I thought I could get him a month or two in jail, on bread and water, I'd be glad ; and see if it would take the devil and the nonsense out of him.'

He paused, and looked at Arthur gravely and appealingly, and Arthur answered with equal gravity, 'It might be for his good no doubt,' while a little sob of laughter rose in his throat as the whimsical side of the situation struck him.

'But all the same,' went on the other, 'he is my own flesh and blood, and my only son. I don't want him got into serious trouble, and this that he has done to you might be put in a very serious light. I'm well aware of that. Now I'm willing to do all in my power to make amends ; any sum that you or your legal adviser might choose to name as damages I would consider. I don't suppose that you, as a gentleman, would name an unreasonable figure, and it's not a trifle in the way of expense that I should stick at if we can agree to make up this matter.'

'You are very good,' said Arthur in the same tone, and while he was casting about for words of courteous and absolute refusal Mr. Waterlow continued.

'Now, there's this Mr. Vaughan. I don't know whether he is a special friend of yours, nor whether he's altogether accountable for his actions, but I put it to you whether I can be expected to put up with any landowner pulling up the mains that my men have laid down, when the Act has been passed, and everything done according to law?'

'I suppose not!' said Arthur, 'but my friend Mr. Vaughan——'

'Well,' went on the contractor, unheeding, 'I believe I can have him in more than one way, for unlawful assembly, inciting to riot, and what not. But it stands to reason I don't want to move in the dark. If you consider that you've got any heavy charge against my son Tom, why, we must see if we can't come to some arrangement, though it's against my principles as a man of business. Live and let live, that's the only way to get on.'

Arthur broke into the kind of laugh that in a woman leans rather to hysterics than to mirth. He could not consider the proposal seriously, but it seemed to be the *métier* of the Waterlow family to propose to him impossible bargains.

'Mr. Waterlow,' he said, mastering himself instantly as he met the other man's astonished look, 'before you say any more I ought to tell you that I quite believe that your son's action was accidental. He was, as you say, not quite himself, and he was playing the fool with a revolver. I was perhaps as great a fool for trying to take it from him, but it seemed at the time the only way to prevent more mischief. He meant to threaten me, but I do not think he meant to fire. I said so as soon as I was able to speak about the matter, and I was only glad to hear that I had not damaged him even more seriously than he had damaged me.'

'You hit hard, Mr. Kenyon!—very hard for a man with a pistol-shot through him. But Tom has a thick skull of his own, and he was soon all right again. So, if I understand that you have nothing to go upon against him, why, I'm at liberty to do my duty as a man engaged upon public business.'

'I cannot make it a matter of exchange, Mr. Waterlow. But I think I may beg of you to remember that my friend Mr. Vaughan acted under a misapprehension, and that but for your

son's conduct the matter would most likely have ended in a mere rough-and-tumble fight, and no harm done. Under the circumstances I think the matter might well be allowed to drop on both sides.'

'I can't altogether do that, Mr. Kenyon. I couldn't have done that in any case, for of course the thing will have been talked about, and other contractors might well wonder why I didn't take the matter up. But since Mr. Vaughan's a friend of yours it shall be understood that I don't want to press it, nor to make things as awkward for him as I might have done. In these out-of-way jobs everything depends upon how a case is put, and if I don't object I daresay Mr. Vaughan will get off easy enough.'

'I hope so,' said Arthur gravely; 'it seems to me that whatever was ill-judged in his action has already been more than sufficiently punished. And I hope it will be remembered that in his case publicity in itself is a severe punishment.'

'As to that,' said Mr. Waterlow bluntly, 'he didn't mind putting himself forward enough to stir up his tenantry against my chaps, and he mustn't mind coming forward to explain what he meant by it. But perhaps—there are a lot of queer tales afloat in this neighbourhood—perhaps you can tell me, Mr. Kenyon, what there is wrong about him; what reason there is that he shouldn't conduct himself like other people?'

'No reason at all, as far as I can see,' answered Arthur, choosing his words. 'Mr. Vaughan has been rendered unduly sensitive by an accident that happened to him when a child, and he has led a very retired life. But for that he would have been a man of great influence and force of character, and even in spite of that he is an excellent man of business, as far as his experience goes. The present circumstances were altogether new to him and to his people, or he would not have acted so mistakenly.'

The contractor looked a little disappointed; he would evidently have preferred to hear that Redmond was a semi-lunatic with homicidal tendencies. But he was silent a moment, meditating something.

'Mr. Kenyon,' he said at last, 'I was not aware until lately—not, indeed, till I came down into these parts this last time—that this affair at college had had such unfortunate consequences for you. I knew that unpleasant things had been said, but I quite thought that they had blown over and no harm done.

And since my son Tom was concerned in the affair, I take upon myself to say that I'm very sorry indeed about it.'

'I am much obliged to you. I am sure you mean most kindly, and—I am much obliged to you.'

Arthur's face was turned away, and he dragged the words out with a desperate effort. The other glanced at him, and partly comprehended what he felt.

'If it was only my son Tom,' he went on, 'I'd get to the bottom of this business somehow, sure enough. But, bless you! though Tom's a fool, he's no rogue; he hasn't brains, I often tell him, to be anything but an honest man. And his cousin Theodore's a different pair of shoes altogether. I'm blest if I could ever find out whether he was a bigger fool or knave; but there's something queer about him. He turns my stomach—and that's the plain fact of the matter.'

As the contractor warmed to his subject, his accent and diction grew several degrees less polished, but not on that account less agreeable. Though no doubt he had more brains than his son, he did not seem to have become anything but an honest man according to his lights.

'No, I don't know what way to get hold of Theodore; he's too fine and grand to have a conscience and bowels like other folks. And his father's dead; he was only a sleeping partner this good while back, and Master Theodore's taking his money out of the old concern as fast as he can. I've not got the whip-hand over him in that way as much as I should like. But if I *could* influence him in any way to do what was right, I beg of you to believe, Mr. Kenyon, that I would do it. It's always been my endeavour to do right by every man, and there's no man can say that he's the worse for me in the way of business, and it goes against me to think that you should be the worse for any of my family.'

Arthur faced round, and the words came now without any effort.

'I am sure of it, Mr. Waterlow,' he said heartily; 'I should not think of holding you accountable for your nephew's doings; and as for your son, I can well suppose that he was merely a tool in his cousin's hands. God helping me, I must just make the best of a bad matter; and though the trouble looks black enough, there are times when I begin to see how some good may be brought out of it yet.'

(To be concluded.)

*FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW.***Potential
Heroism.**

THERE is nothing, I think, which gives me more pleasure than the discovery of heroism in lowly places. And there is so much of it to discover. There was a case reported in the papers some time ago, hidden in a sort of backwater part of a column, which was just such a piece of quiet heroism. It was an inquest on a woman, only just over thirty, the wife of a City clerk. He had been ill, indeed was then on the verge of death. For months his wife had nursed him single-handed by day and night, with no relaxation, no off duty hours, and no one to look on and cheer and sympathise or applaud. One morning she was found dead by the bedside and the doctor said it was failure of the heart's action, due to her being completely run down with waiting on the sick man. In addition, an autopsy showed that she had caught phthisis through sleeping with the consumptive husband. Even the coroner exclaimed, "What a devoted woman"! And I thought of the deadly tiredness of her morning waking, the awful effort of the night watching, the gradual numbing of all her worn-out powers, and behind it all the knowledge that she could not, must not rest, must not break down till the husband was gone. This was a tired soul whose heaven will be 'to do nothing for ever and ever,' until work itself to her becomes rest.

The nation at large seems, too, to be exhilarated as by a breath of pure air when any story of British pluck and disciplined character is made public. At Easter, when in the fog the hungry sea claimed for prey eighty or more of our fellows, we all shuddered sympathetically. But we did more than that. On every hand, from the man in the street and the writer on the newspaper, was heard an echo of what we ourselves felt, that it was good to find how at bottom British men and women, yea and children, are potentially heroic. Into that brief ten minutes before the end how many epics were crammed! What dis-

ciplined character was there which, in the case of the men, made them stand back and send the women and children off to get at least their chance of life! Here is chivalry carried to the point of death! Yet that man who says to the woman, "Go, save yourself for the children's sake," and stands up or kneels down to look death steadily in the face himself, was, perhaps, just an everyday bluff Englishman, in conventional top-hat, whom you may have sat next to any day in an omnibus, and thought how bad were his manners or how hopelessly commonplace his face. That lady who pulls with bleeding hands all night at the oars, or who forgets her own pain and anguish of mind in singing to cheer her fellow-sufferers, was, possibly, one whose dress you have criticised in Regent Street, or whose household management and servant troubles you have gossiped about and laughed at over your tea-table. That little lad who chose to stay by his captain on the bridge and go down with his chief was a boy who very possibly you would have called a horrid little nuisance had he been in your way on the road, and who as likely as not was just a sturdy, round-faced English boy who regarded it as part of his duty at school to make things uncomfortable for his teachers. But death came and looked at those men, women, and children and they knew there was something real to be grappled with, something not petty or conventional to be faced, and the innate manhood and womanhood which is the boast of us all came into action. Earth is full of potential heroes. Is not this enough to make one's soul rejoice, to take the awful commonplaceness from our commonplace surroundings?—and to do this is to do us a service whose greatness we cannot measure.

* * * * *

**A Sense of
Humour.**

It is tragic, but I am terribly afraid it is true, that one of the three delusions from which we are all said to suffer is that we have a sense of humour. Perhaps it would be even truer to say that the appreciation of humour is not regarded as a sense by those who have not got it. It is ignored. How many good and excellent persons do I know—do we not all know?—who do not understand anything even bordering on a joke, to whom words are letters put together to express exact truths, not things to be played with. It is oppressing, it is depressing. Can anything be done? Schools of humour would not, perhaps, be practicable, seeing

that attendance could not be made compulsory. The May Meetings are upon us. Could one of those be used as a beginning? Would a society for the propagation of a sense of humour be of any use? Is there any hope from a microbe or inoculation? I ask these questions very simply. They are not riddles, and I do not know the answers. But I do know that a due appreciation of the funny side of things, and an ability to see the humours of character, action, or speech is a most important part of our complex nature. It adds to the gaiety of nations and lightens the heavy greyness of everyday life. A most successful Christian worker once said that common sense and a sense of humour were essential to all good and lasting work everywhere. And I am inclined to think he did not exaggerate. The practical part of it is what is to be done for the excellent persons who have not a glimmering of that sense. Are they beyond hope?

* * * * *

Coincidence Of course you can always call these things coincidence if you like. But whatever name you call **OR** **Providence?** them you generally know, though, of course you don't say, what you think of them. There is one story which I have lately come across vouched for by the teller. A young lady living in Newcastle felt disinclined to go with her parents as usual to church on Sunday evening, stayed at home and lay down to rest. But a strong feeling came upon her which urged her to play the piano. She went to the instrument and sat down. But it was too dark to see any music, so she carelessly played odd selections which she remembered, just snatches of old tunes. There was only her brother in the house, and when a sudden peal came at the bell he opened the door. Outside was a well-dressed gentleman who in an excited manner asked him to tell the player in the house that he or she had saved his life. He said that he had so many cares and anxieties that he had determined to end his life, and was then on his way to the river. But as he was passing the house, the sound of a tune he had known in happier days stopped him. He lingered and listened for half an hour and he had resolved to go back and take up the threads of life again and try and straighten them out. He sent in the thanks of a living man who would by this time have been dead but for the player, and vanished.

There is no sequel and no moral. Except that common life is not so common as we sometimes think.

* * * * *

Where every Somehow there is an element of incongruity in an
Shop is a International Temperance Congress being held in
Public-house Paris. Yet if all is true that I read of the spread of drunkenness in France, perhaps it is not so incongruous as it sounds.

A Rouen physician, Dr. Brunon, has just published a pamphlet on the subject, which shows the evil to be even worse than was supposed.

The special object of Dr. Brunon's investigations has been drunkenness among women. In Normandy things have come to such a pass that the women drink even more than the men, although the latter are the most inveterate toppers in France. This state of things, in the opinion of Dr. Brunon, is due in large measure to the exceptional facilities the women have for obtaining drink. They have no need to go to the *cafés* or *marchands de vin*—the temptation awaits them at every turn and corner, for, as there are no licensing laws in France, the grocers, greengrocers, coal merchants, and other shopkeepers have adopted the practice of selling intoxicating drink. The servants and other women who make their purchases in their establishments make their visits the excuse for a glass, which is often given them by the shopkeeper with a view to securing their custom. Dr. Brunon declares that a cook who does not drink to excess is almost unknown in Normandy, and he cites the most extraordinary cases of young girls of twenty and under who are already habitual drunkards. In one instance which he relates the cook was methodical enough to keep an account of her drinks, which was found by her mistress, who had several times found her unconscious in the kitchen. The woman was in the habit of taking from twelve to sixteen glasses of alcohol in the course of the day.

Among the working classes the necessities of life may be lacking, but there is always money enough to procure cognac, or rather so-called cognac. The bottle remains on the table throughout the day, and while the husband is away at his work the wife empties it in repeated small doses. The work-girls of the great Normandy linen factories indulge three times a day in what they call an 'all together' (*un tout ensemble*),

consisting of a very little coffee and of a great deal of bad brandy. In the small towns, and even in the villages, things are no better. Dr. Brunon cites a hamlet in the Vescin where the street in which the grocer's shop is found is called Dram Street (Rue de la Fiole), because it is recognised that none of the women of the place ever visits the shop without consuming her *petit verre*. In the coast towns of Normandy the women pass their time drinking what they term, on account of its cost, 'treizesous'—that is, a mixture composed of one sou's worth of sugar, two sous' worth of coffee, and ten sous' worth of brandy. If this is the state of this generation, what of the next ?

* * * * *

Home Work. The woman who is obliged by circumstances to live at home is happy, at least so those women think who have been obliged to leave their homes. But she is badly situated for earning her livelihood, unless of course the work in her case has come near the worker. But the last few years I have been struck with the way we have re-discovered home arts with a view to making them pay. A woman now, in this year of grace, with clever hands, energy, a certain amount of boldness to take the plunge, and a business head can undoubtedly make a very steady respectable little income. There is the lady, for example, whose home-made marmalade was so successful that she began making it for sale to friends. Her *clientèle* grew and grew until she now has to devote two cottages and the working hours of several women to her dainty. Home-made pickles, jams of unusual fruit or special combinations, honeycomb, early flowers, all kinds of things good for the palate, and with a flavour of the country and dainty taste about them, find a ready sale, when you have found the market. And it should not be hard to find. Now, I hear that a new plan has occurred to Lady Evelyn Scott (45, Eaton Square, S.W.), who is willing to explain it in detail to all who are interested, whereby money is to be made out of bonbons, real wholesome, dainty home-grown bonbons. It is a thread worth following up for those whose gifts lie along that way.

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' competitions, see p. 600.)

FIRST SHELF.

Chelsea China must apologise for the omission of an 'Historical Character' in the March number. The name slipped accidentally out of the copy for the press and its absence was overlooked. She is also sorry for two or three omitted answers to Queries in April, which are now as far as possible supplied. Will any neglected ones kindly repeat their inquiries? She cannot undertake to forward books asked for. If an address is omitted, will the lender kindly forward an offer of the book to be inserted in the next issue?

VARIETY SUBJECT.

Describe your first 'good work' outside the home-limits.

The first good work of most of our contributors seems to have consisted in reducing naughty little boys to order. *Tartar* gives the liveliest account of this ordeal. *Sea-Maiden's* hint as to the desirability of awaking some feeling of admiration and respect for noble deeds in their callous little souls is excellent, though Chelsea China fears that Sunday-school boys are now prepared for any 'expectations' on the part of their teacher whatever. But respect or reverence for the admirable or for the unseen does not appear to be the result of Sunday teaching or of Sunday services in the British boy, especially in the British chorister. Nor is it, we fear, likely to develop as long as irreverence is passed over for the sake of fine voices. While 'we must have the boys' voices,' the boys' souls will come off second best. *Doronicum* describes visits to almshouses. *Victoria Bink's* very lively description of a naughty pupil hardly comes under the technical term 'good work,' as, though no doubt it was equally good, it appears to have been undertaken professionally. *Teloiv* is much to be congratulated on the offering of a guinea-pig, which proved that she had conquered her scholars. Her paper gives much food for reflection. Chelsea China does not quite understand *Ruby's* 'district visiting society.' Surely they were not independent of parochial arrangements.

MY FIRST GOOD WORK.

It is now some years ago since, overcome by the persuasions of a too persistent curate, I finally, and in an evil moment, consented to take a Sunday-school class in one of the Brighton parishes. For weeks I had

been wavering between the choice of two evils—a class or a district: the devil or the deep sea, as my brother persisted in calling it. At length I decided in favour of—well, not the deep sea—in other words, the class.

On the Sunday that was to see me begin my first labour of love I arrived at the school and was, not without some secret trepidation, introduced to my charges—a dozen or so of boys, ranging from the ages of twelve to fourteen.

They were mostly of the fisher type, and in addition to the element of wildness and love of adventure inborn in such children, possessed all the native acuteness of the town-bred boy. Many of them, moreover, had that slight admixture of foreign blood in their veins, so common amongst a sea-faring population, which gave them a yet added vivacity, not without its disadvantages in a Sunday school.

A curious hybrid people are these fisher folk of Brighton, with the relics of some bygone superstitions still rife amongst them—as, for instance, on Good Friday, when all the juvenile part of the community turn out for the first time with their skipping-ropes, and skip throughout the entire day. This custom, which is, I believe, peculiar to them, and the meaning of which has been probably forgotten by themselves, is the remnant of an old religious rite, supposed to be typical of the ‘hanging of Judas Iscariot.’ The same kind of semi-religious, semi-superstitious observance is in existence at Malta, where the native sailors spend Good Friday in keel-hauling the traitor apostle. Amongst my pupils I remember one, a Jack Gunn, the direct descendant—great-grandson, I believe—of the celebrated Martha Gunn, who flourished in the days of George IV., and had the honour of giving his Majesty, the then infant Prince of Wales, his first dip in the sea. (Her picture, in which she is represented in bathing costume, with the royal babe in her arms, is still to be seen at the Pavilion, Brighton.)

Such were the boys for whose good behaviour and religious instruction I was responsible for two mortal hours every Sunday. It was not long before I was compelled to own to myself that I had undertaken a task that would tax my capabilities to the uttermost.

And here I am, alas! obliged to admit that, viewed in the light of other Sunday schools in which since those days I have occasionally taught, I am more and more impressed with the fact that ours was, taken altogether, a not by any means exemplary one. The clergy did their best, but the difficulty of enforcing anything like order and discipline among such wild and unruly spirits was great indeed, and the time that should have been devoted to teaching was mostly taken up in the often fruitless attempt to preserve some small degree of quiet. However well and carefully prepared your lesson might be, when it came to the point you found little or no opportunity of imparting it. Such at least was my sad fate!

I well remember one very snowy Sunday afternoon, when the whole school, for some unknown reason, broke out into open rebellion. They climbed out of the windows, locked the whole bevy of unfortunate teachers into the schoolroom, took away the key, stuffed the lock with snow, and shouted defiance from without. After that the stalwart forms of two policemen might, for several Sundays, have been observed patrolling the court outside, in the maintenance once more of law and order. But external authority of this kind must, however necessary, be always opposed to the true spirit of a Sunday school. Such a serious rebellion as this was of course but an isolated occurrence, due partly to the temporary absence of many of the teachers, partly to an outbreak on the part of the boys of a particularly unmanageable burst of spirits. And ‘boys will be boys’ to the end of the chapter, as indeed we all know!

There was one way, however, in which I could, without screaming myself hoarse, or otherwise unduly straining my vocal organs, keep the whole class perfectly quiet and good, for at least a reasonable period of time.

This was by *telling* not *reading* them a story. It was curious to remark how with the appearance of a book all traces of interest would disappear. And so when a short formula of the lesson had been gone through, I would often weakly yield to the entreaties of 'Teacher, please tell us a tale.' It was not, I know, strictly *en règle*, but the temptation was too strong to be resisted, and as a sop to my conscience the story was invariably adorned with a painfully striking moral. The good people were always most signally rewarded, while the bad ones were dealt with in a correspondingly severe manner!

As a field of character study there can be none better than a Sunday school. It is curious also to denote the difference in that class especially of the boy as an individual unit, and the same boy in the company of his fellows. Separate him from his companions, and talk to him alone for a little, and you will find him shy, ill at ease, and anxious to escape from you. Talk to him again when he has rejoined the others, all his self-confidence will have returned and he is once more as daring and untameable as ever.

Sometimes, too, quite unexpected traits of character will suddenly reveal themselves. Thus on one occasion I was urging a boy who was on the eve of his Confirmation to prepare for it by some specially good resolution. He was silent for a few moments, then, with a light breaking over his face, 'I know, teacher,' he said; 'I'll promise never again to sing music-hall songs to the hymn tunes in church.' And I have reason to believe that he faithfully kept his word.

Teaching at a Sunday school necessitates, of course, visiting the parents of one's charges in their own homes. I can remember some humorous touches in connection with these visits. On my first introduction to one mother, noticing that her room contained several small models of a ship, I pointed to them with the remark, 'I suppose, Mrs. Reeves, that your husband was a sailor.' 'Well, miss,' she answered ambiguously, 'he was a sailor, and he wasn't a sailor, but he died loved and respected by all!' What she exactly meant I have never to this day discovered.

Then there was another woman, the happy possessor of three or four Persian cats, whom with a geographical perversity she invariably designated 'my Prussians.' Also a third, who though nearly bald, complained of a 'neuralgy' which she persisted in declaring was caused by the weight of her hair!

Owing to various circumstances, I have now for some time past resigned my Sunday class, but often the old familiar and not too respectful greeting of 'Hullo, Teacher!' falls on my ear while walking in the Brighton streets. The last time I was hailed in this unceremonious fashion I had some difficulty in recognising in the begrimed and blackened countenance of the sturdy young coal-heaver thus addressing me the features of a former pupil, one of the few who had not adopted the calling of a fisherman.

Whether 'my boys' derived any permanent or even temporary good from my three years' 'ministration' amongst them I am not prepared to say. I am inclined to think, however, that in the added interest, the larger knowledge, and the increased power of love and sympathy thus obtained, it was I myself, perhaps, who reaped most benefit from that mutual intercourse—a fulfilment, it may be, of that Divine law, 'Give, and it shall be given unto you.'—TARTAR.

My *very* first good work can hardly be said to have been 'outside the home-limits.' It was carried out a long—a very long time ago. The Good Work-ee, if I may coin an expression, was about fifteen. She wore a full claret merino frock, and a black silk jacket much trimmed with

fringe. Her hair was plaited into several little tails on each side, the ends of which were gathered together and fastened up with a bow behind so that the tails formed a sort of puff on either side of her pale little face. She wore a bonnet with very wide strings. The Good Worker was about the same age but bigger and pinker, with hair in rolls, not plaited but fastened up with a large velvet bow.

She said the collect and Catechism, which I 'explained,' and we read a chapter, and then a piece of *Ivo and Verena*, or *The Christmas Mummers*. I do not know how long this good work lasted or why it came to an end, probably because the pupil went to a situation. She was the gardener's daughter. We knew each other quite well in our week-day frocks in the garden, but we were very shy of one another on Sunday mornings.

My first really outside good work took place somewhat later, and was not spontaneous. It was decreed by the elders that I ought to do something useful, and it was arranged that I should take a class twice a week in what was called the 'garden school,' a little school managed by the Rector's wife in the Rectory garden—and, I conclude, a survival from earlier times. I shall never forget that school nor the abject terror which I had to overcome before I could resolve on entering it. I thought of Miss Edith in Langley School, of Ethel May and Cocksmoor. I said my prayers as I walked up and down the street in front of the entrance. I said the multiplication table many times over. I am afraid that I used to cry on the night before my bi-weekly visits.

But I did not tell and I went on going there. The school was a squarish room full of little round classes, in the middle of one of which I was put. They all, as I recollect, read and recited at the same time. I had to teach arithmetic and Scripture. The sums remained a horror to the end, but I began to have views as to how to teach Scripture, and I liked the little girls. There was a struggle between the rising sense of interest and capacity and the extreme terror of the strange scene. There were soon changes at the Rectory and with them, I think, the school and my first good work ended. I never felt myself at all a success, but I suppose the fact that I did go through with it made some difference in after life.—UNDINE.

Plato is said to have considered a boy the most difficult to tame of all wild beasts ; if this be true my first good work—an attempt to tame eight of them concentrated in one small class in Sunday school—assumes quite heroic proportions.

Yet I found the task easier than I feared, possibly by reason of feminine wiles, which a philosopher might disdain to employ.

Eight little urchins, ages varying from six to ten years old, who had been given up as impossible by teacher after teacher till I was the last barrier between them and the two rival schools—Roman Catholic and Wesleyan—anxious to seize them if the class were disbanded.

I came, I saw, and by hook and by crook (chiefly crook), I conquered.

They met me on the first Sunday, defiant yet uncertain. Did I know their evil reputation, they seemed to ask ? if so, they would not disappoint my expectations. Memories of a governess who *would* impute rebellious motives and deeds, and my own feeling, 'If you think I am so nasty, I *will* be as horrid as I can,' helped me to realise this pariah feeling of theirs, and I acted accordingly.

I appeared to take for granted that they *could* not be naughty, and feigned much surprise as well as grief when some one seemed likely to dispel this view of them. This treatment arrested them by its novelty, and the eldest of them, a little Irish scamp with a heart somewhere, began to think a *good* opinion almost as well worth winning as a bad one.

They gradually began to learn their collects like the other classes, and even to walk to church on 'First Sundays' with some semblance of order; but one terrible drawback was well-nigh insurmountable.

Familiarity with sacred things—the Bible story taught without reverent explanation at an undenominational school—had bred the most awful lack of reverence for holy things. Here my course of instruction became *quite* irregular, yet I cannot think that it altogether failed. I gave up any attempt at the Bible stories they knew only too well, any mention brought about jests which stuck to memories through which rebuke slipped: it was useless to teach them more Scripture just then. So after the collect was learnt and explained, for the rest of the hour I told them stories—stories of self-sacrificing heroism, stories of brave daring such as all boys love, stories of patriotism and of devotion to duty, and all with kindred moral: that our own safety, our own happiness, our own lives, are not the first consideration to a Christian hero—such a strange doctrine to these untaught little souls.

It was sweet to hear the comments change—to hear 'Well, he *was* a silly—I should have thrown the children out and escaped from the wolves,' corrected by another, 'Then you'd have been a coward;' and I cannot help hoping that those Sunday afternoons did more than keep those boys quiet, more than make them more respectful and friendly to their teacher; that the tales I told them from the Book of Golden Deeds may bear fruit in those barren little lives, that my tiny piece of work may have been of its kind and in some small degree 'good.'—SEA-MAIDEN.

PRIZE WINNER FOR MARCH.

Miss R. O. Ballard, 28, St. Aubyn's, Hove, Brighton.

VARIETY SUBJECT FOR MAY.

Six most lifelike characters in English fiction, with reasons.

HISTORICAL CHARACTER FOR MAY.

Bertrand du Guesclin.

WANTED !—A SUBJECT.

Lost, stolen, or strayed! a subject of Queen Chelsea China. The court is in a state of consternation and helplessly conjectures reasons in season and out of season to account for the mysterious or otherwise disappearance of the above-mentioned subject. The ordinary attendants of the court have explored the length and breadth of 'China Cupboard'-land, but to no purpose.

Therefore I have been engaged to unravel the mystery. I am a detective, a very superior and experienced one, and, knowing these things of old, I made straight for the 'Printer's Fortress.' The 'devil' who reigns there denied all knowledge of the subject and would fain have denied me admission to his 'Inferno' also. But I am not a person to be trifled with, so ignoring ceremony I entered, and commenced investigations. The result was not satisfactory, therefore I turned my attention to 'fields and pastures new.' In the 'House of Accumulation,' the abode of 'Work,' there were sounds of tumult and hurrying feet, and the crowd

of inmates were well calculated to hide one small subject in their midst. But alas ! I failed to recognise the object of my visit.

The hospital next claimed my attention, as illness now and again accounts for a strayed subject, but no ! the case remains shrouded in mystery.

Lest you should suspect lack of skill in *me*, I will explain my view of the affair. The niche of a subject in court is empty ; the court rushes off to find the occupant ; I am engaged—I gather no one has seen or knows the said occupant.

Wherefore (I whisper this) I conclude the missing subject has never existed. Nothing could be more simple, and I have no doubt our Queen will be able to clear up the whole mystery in due time.—LINDUM.

SÊCOND SHELF.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR MARCH.

(‘Glory of Warrior.’)

1. ‘He wept for worlds to conquer—half the earth
Knows not his name, or but his death, and birth,

He “wept for worlds to conquer!” he who ne’er
Conceived the globe he panted not to spare!’

2. ‘The king grew vain:
Fought all his battles o’er again:
And thrice he routed all his foes; and thrice he slew the slain.’

3. ‘You die—there’s the dying—’

4. ‘Why may not imagination trace *his* noble dust, till we find it stopping a bung-hole?’

5. ‘Ammon’s great son one shoulder had too high.’

(Trace the above quotations, and explain the allusions.)

6. Tell the story of the hero alluded to and the pirate or robber. (*In a few words.*)

ANSWERS FOR MARCH.

(‘Alexander the Great.’)

1. BYRON. ‘The Age of Bronze,’ ii. It is said that when Alexander had conquered all the then-known world, he wept because there were no more worlds to conquer ; and that, when the philosopher Anaxarchus suggested that there might be a plurality of worlds, he wept because he could not conquer those.

2. DRYDEN. ‘Alexander’s Feast,’ 50–53. When Timotheus, ‘the master,’ played martial music, Alexander was affected by it in the way described.

3. ‘You die—there’s the dying Alexander.’

R. BROWNING. ‘Old Pictures in Florence.’ This and the preceding lines refer to the wonderful power of Greek art, which displayed Beauty, Movement, Life, even Death, in a way transcending Nature.

4. SHAKSPERE. ‘Hamlet,’ v. i. Hamlet, musing on a skull, reflects on the vicissitudes of human life, and traces the dust of Alexander to most base uses.

5. POPE. Prologue to 'Satires.' After he had visited the Temple of Jupiter Ammon, Alexander used to call himself the son of the god. Pope contrasts this lofty claim with the fact of a slight personal deformity, recorded by Plutarch.

6. A pirate was brought before Alexander and accused of having killed and robbed 'many a man.' His answer was—

'I have a heart like unto thine;
Our deeds be of one colour
And in effect of one desert.'

And the king replies—

'Thine answer have I understood;
Whereof my will is that thou stand
In my service and still abide.'

This is quoted from GOWER's 'Confessio Amantis,' bk. iii., but the story is told in many different ways, all having the same bearing.

MARKS FOR MARCH.

60 : *Athena, Double Dummy, Eleanor, Irnham, Isabel, Melton Mowbray.*
54 : *Honeylands.* 50 : *E. T., S. Millard.* 42 : *Blanchelys.* 40 : *A. C. R.,*
The Blue Cat. 39 : *White Cat.* 34 : *Syndicate.* 32 : *Dorfchen.* 30 : *Blue*
Wings, Nemo. 24 : *Ethel Watkinson, Malaprop.* 22 : *Trimmer.* 18 :
M. R. A.

Lenore, Sea-Maiden, W. Adey.—A Notice appears each month after the Search Questions to say that *answers are to be posted before the 25th of each month.* The post-marks show when this rule is disregarded.

Fourteen Streams is credited with 50 marks for February.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR MAY.

('These old Mays had thrice the life of these.')

1. 'Is not this the mery moneth of Maye
When love-lads masken in fresh aray?'
2. (a) 'For to doen his observance to May
(b) 'To do observance to the morn of May.'
3. 'The happiest time of all the glad New Year.'
4. 'When May follows
And the whitethroat builds and all the swallows.'
5. 'Here are my buds of lily and of rose,
And here's my namesake blossom may;
And from a watery spot
See here forget-me-not,
With all that blows
To-day.

6. Give a short description in prose or verse (original or quoted) of an old May-day custom.

NOTICE.—Answers (to SEARCH QUESTIONS only) to be posted before the 25th of each month to *Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon.* 'Search Questions' to be written *outside* each envelope.

THIRD SHELF.

QUERY.

Miss Menzies, Castle Menzies, Aberfeldie, N.B., would be glad to know the author of a 'Prayer for Christmas Eve,' beginning—

'O Lord, there sit apart in lonely places
On this the gladdest night of all the year,
Some stricken ones with sad and weary faces,
To whom the thought of Christmas brings no cheer.'

(There is no charge for literary queries.)

ANSWERS.

Chelsea China informs Miss Duberley that 'The Throstle' is in all the editions of Tennyson's Poems, and appeared first in the volume entitled 'Demeter and Other Poems.'

The question about the position of Stonyhurst was, we believe, intended to apply to its ecclesiastical, not to its local situation.

Whether 'Literary Clubs develop "really good authors,"' as Miss Duberley asks, is perhaps a matter of opinion. One such certainly developed many contributors to THE MONTHLY PACKET—Miss Peard, Miss Florence Wilford, the present Editor, with several others, all belonged in early youth to such a club under the late editor's auspices. It may be interesting to note that Mrs. Humphrey Ward was also for a time a member of the same little society.—CHELSEA CHINA.

Frideswide would be much obliged if Chelsea China would tell her (1) The author of the quotation—

'Love is a present for a mighty king.

2. The proper pronunciation of the name Dagmar.
3. The name of a book by Miss Yonge in which a godmother talks about the Catechism to her three god-daughters—Mary, Audrey, and Helena. Is the book still in print?

1. It is found in a Welsh Triad.
2. In English, as spelt.
3. 'Conversations on the Catechism,' to be obtained probably from Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co. They appeared in early numbers of THE MONTHLY PACKET.—CHELSEA CHINA.

NATURE NOTES.

MAY.

The following flowers, insects, &c., have all been observed by me at Blackheath, Kent, March, 1899.

March 1st.—Found Looper Caterpillars on ivy.

March 2nd.—Leaves of Coltsfoot first appeared exactly eight days after the flowers.

March 3rd.—Whilst pruning ivy on wall saw several cocoons of spiders' eggs. Counted the eggs in one of these cocoons; there were one hundred and forty-seven of them of the colour of white currants. As an experi-

ment, have put a twig of ivy, with a cocoon attached to it, under a bell-glass, to see if the eggs will hatch ; on the same twig clings the dead body of the little mother spider—probably one of the *Clubiona*.

March 4th.—The lady-birds are waking up ; saw three species in the garden. The common two-spot, the common seven-spot, and the large seven-spot (*Coccinella labilis*).

March 9th.—Almond blossom in flower. Pulled a loose piece of bark from pear-tree, and came upon a colony of some ten beautiful Scarlet Spiders (*Trombidium hirsutissimum*) ; suddenly a Hunting Spider (*Salticus scenicus*) sprang out of another crevice into the midst of them.

March 10th.—Found honeysuckle leaves covered with the louse *Aphis lanicera* ; they are the exact colour of the leaves.

March 11th.—Peach blossom in flower ; first leaves out on hawthorn.

March 12th.—Lesser Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*) first flowered. There are a number of bees hovering over the Crocus bed.

March 13th.—First sweet Violet out. Dug up Wireworm, the grub of a click beetle (*Elater lineatus*) ; also a centipede, not as long as its name—*Arthronomus longicornis*. Whilst pruning ivy, disturbed a chrysalis not long formed, as its tail end (by which it was suspended) moved rapidly to and fro. It is barely an inch in length and almost transparent, and of a green colour, somewhat lighter than the ivy leaves. Saw gossamer floating in the air, but could not distinguish the little spider (*Aranea oblectrix*) at the end of it.

March 14th.—Blue Hyacinth and white Hyacinth in flower in the garden.

March 15th.—Pink Hyacinth first out.

March 16th.—Celandine, Daffodils and Arabis, first in flower. Saw two different kinds of stickleback being caught by boys out of a pond. The boys called them both 'Tidlers' ; one, the three-spined stickleback, *Gasterosteus aculeatus*, looked to me prettier than I had ever seen it before. It was silver, blue, and red, its tail ending in a reddish-gold fringe.

March 17th.—Almond blossom falling ; Chinodoxia first in flower. Noticed small fly, with very conspicuous wings, flying in the garden. When it settled on the hawthorn looked at it through a magnifying lens, and found by its shape and fringed wings it was one of the Phora.

March 18th.—Plum blossom in flower. The green chrysalis has the look of oilskin now. It is quite stiff, the head ends in a small beak or snout.

March 19th.—Brought chrysalis into warm room because of bitter cold. The form of wings, with dots on them, can plainly be seen inside.

March 23rd.—Alas ! something has killed the chrysalis and its inmate ; it has become unfixed and rolled on its back, and has small brown holes in it. It is also covered with minute scarlet specks. Looked at the latter through lens, and found they were alive, a species of red spider (*Acarus holosericeus*).—WINIFRED SPURLING.

March 10th.—Saw Lesser Celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*), Daisy (*Bellis perennis*), and Barren Strawberry (*Potentilla fragariastrum*). They may have been out a few days, as I had been unable to leave the house for eight or nine days previously. My pet newt (*Triton cristatus*), which I have had for at least ten years, seems to enjoy being in the water.

March 13th.—Dandelion in flower.

March 15th.—Was told of Germander Speedwell (*Veronica Chamædrys*).

March 16th.—Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*), Lesser Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*), and Lungwort (*Pulmonaria officinalis*) out. Two Thrushes had a battle, and were at once joined by two others. All the time they sang an angry song.

March 23rd.—With the last few days of very cold weather my newt has not been so active, and is generally in retirement under half a flower-pot.

The locality for all the above observations is Mytton, in Yorkshire.—SKYLARK.

Cheadle, Staffordshire, Feb. 27th.—Lapwings, or Peewits as they are

locally called (*Charadrius pluvialis*), paired and return to their nesting-fields.

March 1st.—Several males of the Dotted Border Moth (*Hybernia progemmaria*) flying around and settling on gas lamps, the females being semi-apterous and unable to fly.

March 6th.—First fully-open flower of the Lesser Celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*).

March 8th.—A male of the Pale Brindled Beauty Moth (*Phigilia pilosaria*), on the trunk of an oak-tree, just emerged from its chrysalis stage. The marking and colour of this moth so strongly resembles the bark upon which it was at rest that it was difficult to an inexperienced eye to see the moth at all. Pied Wagtails (*Motacilla lugubris*) flying over. These birds partially migrate south from this district in severe weather, and return in the spring; and these were the first I had seen for some time.

March 11th.—The Rooks remain at their new nests all night, which is a sure sign that eggs must be laid. Until this happens, the rooks return every night at dusk to their winter quarters in thick woods in a sheltered valley some five miles distant, returning to their nests at day-break.

March 12th.—Coltsfoot (*Tusselago farfara*), Barren Strawberry (*Tormentilla fragariastrum*), and Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), all in flower. The female flowers of the latter, resembling minute fir-cones, grow upon the ends of the branches just below the male flowers, or catkins, from which, with every gust of wind, the pollen falls.

March 13th.—A Robin's nest at Barlaston in a hole in the stump of a tree, lined and ready for eggs.

March 15th.—Wych Elm (*Ulmus montana*) in full flower.

March 19th.—Larch (*Larix europæa*), Aspen (*Populus tremula*), with its soft, woolly catkins, and Sallow (*Salix caprea*), all in blossom.

March 20th.—Two thrushes' nests completed, and one containing an egg.

March 22nd and 23rd.—Snowstorms and severe frost and bitterly cold east winds; such weather, I fear, will be fatal to early wild birds' eggs and the blossom of fruit trees.

NOTE.—Some of the dates given may appear to be somewhat late, but it must be borne in mind that *Cheadle* is in North Staffordshire, and 680 feet above sea-level.—ENOTS.

March 18th.—*Veronica Buxbaumii* in ploughed field at Otterbourne, Winchester.—ARACHNE and CHELSEA CHINA.

Feb. 10th.—First Crocus, last year a week or ten days' earlier.

Feb. 22nd.—First bee; last year Feb. 16th.

Feb. 24th.—Peach blossom in bloom; last year Feb. 17th.

March 8th.—Frogs appeared in pond; last year Feb. 15th.

March 13th.—First Sulphur Butterfly; last year April 2nd. First Dafodil; last year March 9th.

March 14th.—A Tortoiseshell Butterfly, which I never remember seeing before so early in the year.

March 15th.—First Hyacinth; last year March 16th.

It will be seen that flowers are more backward this year than last, but that the butterflies are more forward.—CORN IN EGYPT.

AT THE FOREIGN LIBRARY.

Lettres d'un Curé de Campagne. By Le Querdac. Published by Lecoffre, Paris.—This is a remarkably interesting little book which deals with the various social and political difficulties which the clergy in France are now obliged to face.

The keynote of the book is struck near the beginning, where we find the good, kind-hearted young curé going to his bishop to receive his

benefice. On the way he makes his plans for the future : he is to have a little home of his own, and a garden where he means to indulge his love of gardening ; he will be master of his own time, and will do theological literary work, and he hopes for pleasant society among his clerical neighbours—such are his dreams beforehand. After his interview with the bishop, he returns with a sadder but a higher outlook : he is his Master's servant going to tend His sheep. He has taken up a burden which he must carry for his Lord, and the simple pleasures fall into their proper place in the background.

In looking at the curé's work, we would remark that his ultimate success seems to a great extent due to his persistency in looking for the best side of his neighbours and developing their good points. For a long time, however, he has to contend with enemies who seemed endowed by the devil himself with evil imaginations, and who manufacture some bad intention which they pretend to be behind every one of the poor man's simple, good deeds.

La Vita Militare. By De Amicis. Published by Successori Le Monnier, Florence.—An extremely pretty set of sketches of Italian military life, written with a delicacy of touch which reminds one of Mrs. Ewing ; we hardly know how.

Few English people know much of the Italian private soldier ; from time to time we hear rumours of the wonderful amount of fatigue-work their officers get out of them under a burning African sun, and a few English visitors to Rome have taken an interest in the late Com^{te} Cappellini's institute for soldiers, which, whether or not we quite agreed with his teaching, was certainly a very striking work, but of the life of the "soldate" we know little. De Amicis paints him to the world ; he shows us the love of home felt by the mountain boy, the quiet endurance shown in the long night-marches, where the orderlies with respectful watchfulness look after their boy-officers lest they fall asleep as they walk. The patience of the sentries who have to face a howling crowd without a word until they are actually stoned, and the wonderful work done by soldiers during the cholera outbreak—all this and more besides is found in "*La Vita Militare*."

Every national army has its own characteristics. "Courage and Dash" is to be found among the French. "Courage and Stay" is the proud motto of Tommy Atkins. "Pazienza e Coragio" is the watchword of the hard-working Italian northerner.

Gertrude de Chauzane. By Madame E. de Pressensé.—Here under a French garb we have the doubtful pleasure of meeting our old friend, the awful "committee lady," who knows exactly how every case of distress should be dealt with. Besides this terrible female, there are various pleasanter characters in the book. We remark how things must have changed in France when a well brought-up unmarried girl is represented as starting out alone after dusk to go "slumming" in Paris.

"Sabine," another story sometimes bound up with the above, is stupid, and though written with the highest intentions is not worthy of the author. In connection with "*Gertrude de Chauzane*," I would mention Henri Gréville's "*Le vocu de Nadia*" to such as do not know it. It is a story of Christian Socialism in Russia, and is more powerfully written than Madame de Pressensé's book.

LAURA F. WINTLE.

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

INDIA : CAWNPORE.

QUESTIONS FOR MAY.

9. Give a history of the Cawnpore Mission.

10. We agreed in February that it is always wise to exercise our right of converting all nations. Describe the wisest methods of doing this, in the face of such ancient religions as those of India.

Books recommended :—*Classified Digest of S. P. G. Reports ; Under His Banner ; 'Cawnpore' in 'Historical Sketches,'* price 1½d. (post-free), S.P.G. ; *Pastoral Work in the Mission Field*, by Bishop J. Selwyn, 1s. 6d., S.P.C.K.

Answers to be sent to Bog-oak, Industrial School, Andover, by June 1st.

CLASS LIST FOR FEBRUARY.

CLASS I.

M. P., 20 ; Honeysuckle, 18 ; Anskar, 16.

CLASS II.

Ierne ; C.W., 14 ; South Downs, 11.

CLASS III.

Veritas, 8.

REMARKS.

3. The Races and Religions of India are very unevenly done. *Ierne* and *Veritas* only name the religions, without a word to say what they are. A line or two, *e.g.*, should have been devoted to Zoroastrianism. *South Downs*, on the other hand, omits all the races, and gives much too long an account of Mahomet. *Anskar* and *C. W.* do not name the Tartar Moghuls. *C. W.* does not mention the Animistic of the hill-tribes of Central India. *Veritas* omits the Hindus. *M. P.* and *Honeysuckle* very good.

10. The points which, in considering our right to Christianize all nations, all should, and some have, brought out are—(1) God has made all men for Himself ; (2) He has given to His Son the heathen for His inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for His possession : therefore no part of the earth, not even the Soudan, is excepted ; (3) Our 'marching orders,' as the old Duke called them—'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature'—show that the time is always ready, and that in season and out of season we are to obey the command. The special *methods* are matters of judgment. The actual 'benefit of missions,' as Bishop John Selwyn says, 'is not arguable by those who acknowledge Christ's Divine authority.' The great argument for the wisdom of exercising our right is correctly given by most. That our education, philosophy, civilisation, take away the faith in old religions, and if Christianity be not substituted, we leave them worse off, without even those halting 'school-masters' which might have brought them to Christ.

'MONTHLY PACKET' NOTICES.**CORRESPONDENCE.**

The readers of the 'Monthly Packet' are invited to address **CHELSEA CHINA** on any subject the discussion of which occurs to them as likely to interest others, especially in connection with articles appearing in the Magazine.

CHINA CUPBOARD PRIZES—

Variety Specimens. Prize, monthly, 5s.

Search Questions (Who, When, and Where). Prize, for six months taken together, £1 1s.

Prose Competition. Monthly Prize, 5s., or 10s., according to merit.

RULES for the above—

(1) Papers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to **CHELSEA CHINA**, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co., Limited; they must NOT be addressed to 'the Editors.' (2) Each envelope must be marked *outside* with the subject to which it refers. Papers under separate competitions or discussions must be in separate envelopes. (3) The correspondent's name and address must be written on every paper: the use of a *nom de plume* for the lists is optional. (4) If competitors fail to comply with any rule, their papers will be disqualified. (5) The real name of the prize-winner is published in each case. (6) There are no entrance fees. (7) Prizes cannot be taken by the same person twice in a half-year.

[The Editors of the 'Monthly Packet' will feel obliged if All Contributors will write their names and addresses clearly on their MSS., and will enclose stamps for return. Unless these conditions are complied with, the Editors cannot undertake to preserve, return, or enter into correspondence about MSS. Much trouble is saved if accompanying letters are enclosed in the parcel instead of being sent separately.

The utmost care is taken in returning MSS., but the Editors can only hold themselves absolutely responsible for such as are sent to them at their own request.]

THE MONTHLY PACKET.

NEW SERIES.

JUNE, 1899.

THE CONQUEST OF LONDON.

BY DOROTHEA GERARD (MADAME LONGARDE DE LONGGARDE),
AUTHOR OF 'A FORGOTTEN SIN,' 'A SPOTLESS REPUTA-
TION,' 'LADY BABY,' ETC.

CHAPTER XX.

TWO MOTHERS.

THAT evening it so happened that Mr. Dyson was dining with Sir Harold Kane, and it likewise happened that he was taking in Miss Kane to dinner.

'Have you ever made a pie-crust?' he asked that young lady suddenly, between the soup and the fish.

Miss Kane raised her pretty brown eyes to his face with a look of blank astonishment.

'A pie-crust? Dear me, no! What should I make a pie-crust for?'

'I don't know; some young ladies do. I suppose you never go into the kitchen?'

'Not very often, certainly; I fancy I should only be in the way there, and besides—well, I really have no time.'

'What makes you so busy?' he asked, stolidly attacking his sole.

'Oh, well, just the usual things. There is always some note or other to answer, or somebody in the house who needs to be talked to, or a drive to take, and then mamma likes me to keep up my piano.'

'Naturally,' said Mr. Dyson, with an impenetrable face. 'All that sort of thing is undoubtedly much better for the hands than kneading pie-crusts.'

Something in his tone awoke a suspicion within her. She glanced at him sideways, uneasily. Was it to test her housewifely qualities that he had put that leading question? Perhaps he was one of those men who value their wives according to the puddings they can make. She knew that some of them were like that. How stupid of her not to have taken her cue at once! But, perhaps, it was still time to catch herself up.

'Of course I don't mean that I *never* go into the kitchen,' she hastily exclaimed, flushing a little with vexation at her own mistake. 'Mamma sometimes sends me there with messages to the cook, and when I was small I was very fond of making dolls' tarts. I daresay I could revive the taste, if I tried very hard,' she added with a not very successfully arch glance.

'It would be a pity to spoil your hands,' he said, without moving a muscle of his face, and glancing down at the pretty white trifles which lay in her lap—fingers which had never grasped anything heavier than a parasol, nor pressed anything harder than piano keys.

'I generally arrange the flowers too,' said Miss Kane, having cast about in her mind for some other commendation which she could truthfully make of herself, and not having found anything else, for by nature she inclined to sincerity.

'But surely not those with thorns? Scratches are such ugly things!'

She began to eat her fish pensively, not quite sure of what to make of him, and presently found herself engaged by her other neighbour.

Mother and son had barely got outside the gates of Kane Park that night when Mrs. Dyson almost too carelessly remarked that amber was exactly the colour for Miss Kane's complexion.

'Did it not strike you that she was looking extremely pretty to-night?' the old lady inquired after a moment, having received neither assent nor denial to her first proposition.

'Yes, she always looks extremely pretty and always exactly the same,' answered Christopher from out of his dark corner.

It was impossible to see his face, and the tone of his voice was not particularly promising, but Mrs. Dyson was not one to be easily frightened off. She had not failed to notice that the relations between Christopher and Miss Kane, which a little while ago had appeared to be progressing so satisfactorily, had

lately unaccountably languished. He had indeed appeared from the first more acquiescent than enthusiastic, and was probably thinking more of pleasing her than himself, yet she knew him too well to believe that he would have raised her hopes only to crush them. And he was quite aware of how her heart was set not upon this marriage in particular, but upon a speedy marriage of some sort. If Miss Kane was favoured by her it was because she appeared to be the most eligible candidate within reach for the post of daughter-in-law, and because she could have no peace until that post was filled, being one of those women who can only die happy if they die grandmothers. What was it that had come in the way of this hope? This it was which she was determined to delay no longer in finding out.

'She has a very even temperament certainly,' the mother now tentatively observed; 'but that generally counts as an advantage; equanimity staves off many disagreeables.'

'As well as variety,' finished the son.

'Variety is not always necessarily pleasant, particularly if it is brought about by a quick temper and excitable nerves.'

'Not pleasant, perhaps, but stimulating. You cannot pretend to say, mother, that you find Miss Kane stimulating?'

Mrs. Dyson reflected for a moment before answering. By right she ought to have felt depressed by this quiet but determined resistance, but, strangely enough, she was, on the contrary, feeling elated. To a mother's keen eye this attitude had hope in it; this was no mere vague indifference to the whole matrimonial question, but rather a methodical opposition to the plan which, although never openly discussed, had been tacitly admitted between them. Mothers are wily creatures under such circumstances, and already this one's mind was at work upon a new idea.

'I can understand her not appearing so to you,' she now remarked; 'not by comparison, that is, with the more picturesque and—well, startling people you have been meeting in all the corners of the earth.'

'Oh, it's not necessary to be startling exactly, nor picturesque either, but I do like a woman to have some surprises in her. Miss Kane is a perfectly well-regulated young lady, who, I am sure, has not a single evil instinct in her, and who would be certain always to do and to say the correct thing and never to lose her temper, but that doesn't prevent her being just a

little like a flat road, of which you can see miles in advance, with no hills and no twists, and no occasion for wondering what there is round the next turn, because there are no turns.'

The mother stirred a little in her own corner.

'Oh, and you prefer women with turns in them?'

'Most decidedly, unless they lead straight into abysses; and I also prefer grey eyes to brown,' he added, quite unnecessarily.

'I thought it was blue ones you used to have a weakness for?'

'Blue or grey, or blue-grey, that's best of all? there's a particular shade that one can never make up one's mind about whether to call it the one or the other; that seems to me the most fetching of all.'

Again Mrs. Dyson's silks rustled in the dark corner.

'Come, Christopher!' she said light-heartedly, 'what else besides the blue-grey eyes? Let's beguile the way by painting a full-length portrait of the ideal *she*. Has she got to be tall or short?'

'Taller than Miss Kane, at any rate, and, whatever she does, she must carry her head well. I can't abide the ostensibly meek woman with her cheek on her breast. Of course she will have to knock under in the long run, but I would prefer her not to do so quite too easily.'

'Tyrant!' laughed the mother outright and very gleefully, and already casting about in her mind for the young person among their acquaintance on whom these particulars would fit; but there was none that would do. A few more skilfully put questions elicited more details, but brought no enlightenment, and at last, somewhat abruptly, Mrs. Dyson relapsed into silence. She had remembered suddenly that Christopher had lately spent most of his afternoons away from home without volunteering any information on his absences, and had even once or twice been late for dinner. On this circumstance she now began to ponder. It was not the son only who had a turn for observation, and when points of this particular class are at issue, feminine acuteness generally carries it over masculine. Mrs. Dyson therefore dropped the subject, but resolved to keep her eyes and ears extremely wide open.

So successfully did she do this that two days later she was able to observe innocently at the breakfast-table that it was a

great pity not having found anything yet for that vacant space above the sideboard. The room would not be complete without one more picture—a landscape, if possible, since they had kept the landscapes in this room.

‘I have been making inquiries,’ she added, stirring her coffee very carefully, ‘and I have heard that there are some very good landscapes in a house not far from here—Gilham or Gilford, or some such name—by a Mr. Venning, who was known for his delicate touch for foliage. I shall not be quiet until I have seen those pieces.’

Christopher flushed all over his thin, sallow face.

‘I should not advise you to try and buy anything *there*,’ he said, smiling a little grimly at the recollection of his recent snub.

Mrs. Dyson looked most admirably surprised. ‘You know the Gilham people?’

‘I met them, at least one of them, accidentally; she had had a spill with her donkey-cart, so of course I lent a hand.’

‘Oh, that suits splendidly; since you are acquainted, you can take me there this afternoon. There is no harm in looking at the pictures, I suppose, even if I am not allowed to buy them?’

Christopher, having begun by being startled by the idea, ended by acquiescing eagerly, only to wonder in the next moment whether the visit would be welcome to the hermits of Gilham. But, once suggested, the prospect was too fascinating to be dropped. Vaguely he felt that to get Philippa and his mother acquainted would somehow be a good thing for himself; he would risk even the girl’s displeasure to bring about this end.

Accordingly that afternoon Philippa, occupied in cleaning her bedroom windows, was startled half out of her senses by the sight of the Swanmere carriage, footman and all, turning in to the dreadful little avenue, and, crouching behind the window-curtains, saw almost with indignation how Mr. Dyson was carefully helping out a white-haired lady in a black lace bonnet. To bring his mother here without a word of warning. This was nothing short of a rank treason.

‘Run down, first, Adela!’ she said to her sister. ‘You’ve at least got a whole skirt on, while my gathers are coming down. I can’t possibly appear in this Great Pig state. I’ll be as quick as I can and I’ll send Cissy after you.’

So Adela, in great trepidation, was the first to be scrutinised by the keen but friendly black eyes of the visitor.

'Pretty enough for anything,' Mrs. Dyson was mentally commenting as she shook hands with the girl; 'but there can be no doubt whatever about the colour of her eyes; they are far too distinctly blue for any question to be raised on the point, and she herself as distinctly belongs to the meek category; not many more surprises in her, I should think, than in Ethel Kane.'

Cissy came next.

'Too fair by half,' she inwardly decided. 'She never had a taste for point colouring. Can I be on a wrong tack, after all? There is only one more chance remaining.'

It was only some ten minutes later that the appearance of the eldest Miss Venning put Mrs. Dyson's mind at rest. In the moment that she entered the room a great certitude fell upon the mother's spirit. Even before she had ascertained the exact shade of the eyes she felt sure that she had come to the right place, after all. 'Turns enough here, I should fancy,' she reflected, 'and surprises too, perhaps more than he counts on; but I suppose he knows his own business best, and she's twice as handsome as Ethel.'

'My father's pictures?' said Philippa, answering what Mrs. Dyson had skilfully turned into an apology for her visit. 'Do you really care to see them? Have you heard of them?' She flushed with pleasure as she spoke. Any tribute to her father's memory was sure of awaking her sympathy. She had always dimly understood that he was one of the unappreciated of the earth.

'We have very few remaining; most of them were sold lately; but there are two small ones in the next room which I can show you.'

A minute later Philippa, with ill-concealed pride, was pointing out to her visitor the two river pieces which were indeed little gems of their kind.

'Somebody once said that his sunshine was the only real sunshine in England,' she explained eagerly, and turning at this moment was astonished to find the visitor's eyes fixed, not on the picture but on her own face. She reddened a little under the scrutiny, although aware that it was not inimical, and on her side noted that the shrunken but mobile face which looked out from under the fluffy white hair was the sort of face that you immediately took on trust, either with or without your will. With a pang of regret the thought shot

through her how fortunate Mr. Dyson was still to have a mother.

And are there no other pictures of your father's here ?' Mrs. Dyson was inquiring meanwhile.

'Only mamma's portrait ; perhaps you did not notice it in the drawing-room.'

'Oh, I should like to see that,' the visitor said more vivaciously. 'I fear that there is no chance for me, though I *had* hoped to obtain one for Swanmere, but, do show me your mother !'

The drawing-room was empty when they came back to it, Mr. Dyson having, according to what he felt to be his duty, made his way to the stables, and Adela and Cissy having retired to the kitchen to see about tea.

'This is mamma,' said Philippa, standing still before the cane and acorn frame, and looking up wistfully into the beloved face above.

Mrs. Venning, although barely forty, had been an old woman already when this portrait was painted, and the bunch of violets she held between her hands contrasted strangely with the faded, unyouthful face.

'She is not like you,' was all Mrs. Dyson said, after a moment's silence, but at the same moment Philippa felt her fingers gently pressed between the kid-enclosed ones of her companion, and a wave of something warm surged over her lonely heart.

It was a wonderfully long visit for a first one, and wonderfully free from awkwardness, considering the circumstances. Mrs. Dyson seemed at least as easy to get on with as her son, and her interest in everything was extraordinary, almost inexplicable ; for she insisted, not only on seeing the convalescent Bobbin, but also all the dogs, six of whom, as somewhat to her consternation she had gathered from Philippa, were by and by to become inmates of Swanmere. There was a stroll taken in the garden, too, whose neglected appearance on this sunshiny spring day looked somehow more picturesque than pitiable, and during which the entertainment of the chief visitor naturally fell to Philippa's share. In the course of the afternoon she gained the indefinite impression that Mrs. Dyson liked her, but it was only at parting that the impression became a certainty.

'I—I am afraid I cannot well return your visit,' she said

with some hesitation, as she helped her visitor with her cloak. 'My sisters and I do not go out at all now.'

'No need to,' briskly replied Mrs. Dyson. 'I prefer coming here if you will let me,' and then, almost to her consternation, Philippa felt a quick little kiss fall on her cheek, while her hands were even more warmly grasped than they had been before her mother's picture.

'Remember, that if you want books or anything, you've only got to write me a line; I'm your nearest neighbour and therefore it's my business to look after you a bit—books, or music, or flowers, well advice—just anything that your mother would have given you if she had been alive, and that she can't give you now.'

And almost immediately after that she was gone, and Philippa was standing on the doorstep looking after the carriage, and with a vague but pleasant feeling of surprise moving within her.

As for the mother, she went home happy that day, and not thinking at all of Miss Kane. Was not Christopher rich enough now to marry whom he liked? But oh, could he not be a little quicker about it?

CHAPTER XXI.

THE EMIGRANTS.

It was probably with the view of helping him to be quicker about it that Mrs. Dyson, on reaching home, immediately began to make a selection of books and music that would be likely to suit her new girl friends at Gilham, and, completely absorbed by the finishing details of the new home, she began suddenly to find time for taking drives, which generally went in one direction, and for which she frequently requested her son's company.

The weeks that followed were perhaps the happiest time in Philippa's life, although she did not stop to analyse in what exactly her happiness consisted, nor dared to speculate upon the possible time of its duration. She knew only that the dreariness was gone from Gilham; that, for the first time since her mother's death, she felt that she was not quite alone in the

world, that she had friends at hand on whom she could rest. Mr. Dyson was a quite different sort of family friend from what Lord Maurice Berners had been, and in her private mind Cissy found him not half so amusing, too serious and earnest altogether, and quite dreadfully elderly, but even she could not deny that it was pleasant to have the run of the Swanmere conservatory and grape-house, and under the influence of these new interests began to recover a little of her former spirits.

And yet just now there was a very bitter moment impending, for the day had arrived on which the six dogs were to be transferred from Gilham to Swanmere. After many earnest discussions between Philippa and Mr. Dyson it had been decided to do the thing in one move. It would be kinder, even to Cissy, as Mr. Dyson argued, since it would spare her the slow torture of seeing her pets dwindle one by one.

'I have heard it stated by people who have tried it on their own persons,' he advanced as an argument, 'that if you have several teeth to pull it is much easier to have them all out at one sitting. After the first two you feel nothing I am told; and I fancy it must be the same with other sorts of wrenches.'

To the dogs, certainly, the wholesale arrangement was kinder, since, being transferred in a lump, they could not well pine for want of companionship.

Cissy had begun by savagely rebelling, but had ended by acquiescing, quelled by Philippa's inexorable determination, and perhaps also moved by the hope of getting a little more to eat when the dogs were gone. For two days she went about with swollen eyes that hurt Philippa far more than they did her, and which painfully distressed good Mrs. Dyson.

'It does seem a shame to part them from their dogs, just because of forty-five shillings a year,' she had said one day to her son during the homeward drive; but Mr. Dyson appeared a little callous on the subject.

'I fancy they will get over it—they and the dogs,' he remarked without any symptoms which might have betrayed pity.

'And you are really going to carry them all off?'

'Certainly, since I have been particularly requested to do so. It is absurd that they should starve themselves because of those animals.'

Mrs. Dyson looked at him sideways without being able to come to any satisfactory conclusion concerning his expression,

and quietly dropped the subject. Most joyfully would she have furnished those forty-five shillings wanted for the tax, but with what right could she offer them?

The day of parting had been deferred more than once, but it had come at last, and found Philippa alone at home. Adela and Cissy had started for a long walk on the downs, preferring to avoid at least the last dreadful moment. Awaiting the Swanmere carriage, Philippa wandered out into the garden, accompanied for the last time by the dogs, who, freshly washed and combed, gambolled about her, in gleeful unconsciousness of impending fate. At this season even the Gilham garden was not without its charm. True, the long straight paths were painfully weedy, but it was the time of year when nothing green is quite unwelcome, not even weeds; the untidy hedges were already riotously green, and in every corner the violets had opened their deep blue eyes. The Gilham violets had a history of their own, being one and all descendants of those which figured in Mrs. Venning's portrait. She had been one of those gentle creatures who have few strongly pronounced tastes, but one of them had been for violets, and as her slightly fantastical husband had pretended to find a certain likeness between her and this proverbially retiring flower, he insisted on painting her with a bunch of them in her hand. None of the violets in the neighbourhood being deep enough in colour to suit his taste, a few plants had been procured, had furnished the necessary models, and ended by overrunning the garden. Philippa knew where all the biggest and most scented tufts grew; she had stuck a bunch in her belt and another in her hair, and was stooping to gather more when the gravel crunched sharply just on the other side of the leafy screen. She straightened herself hastily, and saw that Mr. Dyson was close at hand.

'You have come for the dogs?' she asked, turning a little pale at the nearness of the crisis. For the first time Mr. Dyson's visit brought only a mixed pleasure with it.

'The dogs?' he repeated a little blankly. 'Yes, to be sure; of course it is the dogs I have come for.'

'And your mother? Is she here too?'

'She is at home to-day. And your sisters?'

'They are out?'

'Then you are alone?'

'Quite alone,' said Philippa, and at the sound of her own

words she felt a sudden new dread come over her, of a sort she had never known before.

'You shall have the dogs immediately,' she said, with an unaccountable sense of flurry.

'Why immediately? Is it they you are in such a hurry to get rid of, or me? I seem to remember that there is a bench somewhere about here, and I have a mind to take a rest upon it if you will let me.'

The bench was the same on which Philippa had sat last November with Evelyn, on the day of the latter's unexpected return, and when mist had been hanging on the twigs, instead of the freshness of young leaves. Silently she led the way to it, and still in silence sat for some moments beside him, wondering how it was that, whereas conversation was generally so easy, she could think of nothing to say to him to-day, and conscious of his eyes upon her. Suddenly she remembered the violets in her hair, and coloured with vexation. Must it not look as though she had decked herself out expressly for him? Well, and why had she put that bunch there just to-day and quite against her habit, not belonging to the order of young women who can scarcely bear to see a flower without sticking it somewhere about their persons? She did not know, and only knew that she felt half inclined to pluck them out and throw them on the gravel.

'Your sisters have taken leave of the emigrants, I presume?' remarked Mr. Dyson after a rather long pause.

'Yes, they preferred to find them gone to seeing them go.'

'Exactly, so they left you to bear the brunt of the moment. I wonder to what extent the dogs will approve of Swanmere.'

'More than of Gilham, probably,' said Philippa, unable to keep a little bitterness out of her voice, for indeed her heart was heavy within her.

'There will be plenty of mice for them to hunt,' went on Mr. Dyson, in a leisurely tone, whose evenness certainly did not betray much sympathy with the pangs she was undergoing; 'the old house is overrun with them, and birds to chase, too, in case they go in for that sort of sport.'

'And yet you will have to keep them very well locked up at first for fear of desertions,' said Philippa almost sharply, vaguely irritated, as well as unpleasantly surprised by this unexpected callousness. 'Dogs do not always know what is

best for them, and they *are* fond of us, and still have to get fond of you.'

Tears started to her eyes as she said it, for just then Jabberwock laid his black and tan head on her knee and looked up questioningly into her face, as though with a sudden presentiment of parting.

'Oh, it's out of sight out of mind generally with dogs as well as with people,' said Mr. Dyson cheerfully.

She turned upon him her indignant eyes, still veiled with tears, and saw that he was smiling—positively smiling, and at such a moment as this!

'Mr. Dyson!' she stammered, 'I don't understand you.'

He blew away the single violet he had been holding between his teeth, and his face became very grave, graver even than was its wont.

'You shall immediately, but tell me first: Why will you insist on tearing out your own hearts by parting with your four-footed friends?'

'But I have told you why, over and over again; surely you understand——'

'I understand that Gilham is no fit place for them, but neither is it for you. Why should you not go on being their mistress?'

'I cannot be that——'

'You can, by becoming mine as well, and that of Swanmere. Tell me, Philippa, would it be very difficult for you to make up your mind to emigrate along with them?'

With the last words only his eyes began to shine, to shine and to burn so deeply into hers that she did know how to bear the strength of them, and yet could not look away. What his phrase might have left obscure those black eyes of his were making unmistakably clear. Not a sound did she utter, but only stared blankly, too dizzy both mentally and physically to collect her thoughts, far less words. If this astounding possibility had ever crossed her mind, it had always appeared too great and too inconceivable a happiness to come true outside of a fairy tale. And yet, during the few moments that she sat quite still, her hands, of which he had quietly possessed himself, violets and all, lying passive in his, she began, despite her bewilderment, dimly to understand why she had been so happy ever since February.

And although she did not speak the man beside her had got

his answer, and knew that he might dare to take her in his arms, and there, in the shelter of the welcome green screen, to press upon her lips the kiss of betrothal. He was not diffident by nature, and although Philippa herself had not known her own secret until this moment, he had during the last month come very near to guessing the truth, for Philippa always remained bad at concealment, and, besides, how hide a secret of whose existence you are not clearly aware !

When Adela and Cissy came back from their walk they were astonished to be met by Jabberwock at the door, and to find the house as full of dogs as ever. There could, of course, be no objection to Mr. Dyson leaving them under the care of his future wife.

‘But surely he’s miles too old for you !’ was Cissy’s frankly astonished comment, on having grasped the actual state of the case.

‘I don’t know how old he is,’ said Philippa, with blissful indifference to the point mooted ; ‘I only know that he is—well, just himself.’

‘But he has got white hairs among the black !’

‘Has he ? Well, then I like white hairs.’

But presently another view of the case came to Cissy.

‘Then we needn’t have gone to London after all,’ she remarked, having come partially to her senses ; ‘since it seems that the thing can be managed here as well as there. Oh, Phil, do you realise what this means to us all ? It seems to me—to put the matter into a nutshell—that we’ve reached dry land.’

In the great season of depression Cissy had almost lost her propensity for putting things into nutshells, but under the influence of this marvellous event the old instinct stirred again.

‘I realise nothing except that I am happy,’ said Philippa, with the languid dreaminess of a great and new happiness. ‘Yes, I suppose we are saved if it comes to that, but that is not what makes me happy.’

But this unthinking and irresponsible sense of happiness had lasted only a few days when a reawakening sense of duty roused her from her first bliss.

‘Christopher,’ she said, one afternoon, very early in their engagement, ‘of course you must understand one thing : in

marrying me you also marry my sisters ; it would be vile and selfish of me to become your wife unless you promise to help me to look after them.'

'I understood that from the first,' he replied, with the shadow of a smile visible under the brown moustache. 'Is this the hardest condition you have to make ? 'Let's have it all out at once ; what else is expected of me ? '

'To find a husband for Adela, of course,' laughed Philippa, in sheer light-heartedness ; 'and a nice one, mind you,' for she is terribly difficult to please.'

'I shall do my best. Swanmere holds a good lot of people ; if we give her sufficient choice perhaps we may hit off her taste in time. And how about Cissy ? Is she not to have a husband too ? '

Philippa looked at Cissy, just then passing at a little distance—for in this weather it was impossible to sit anywhere but in the garden—and did not answer at once.

'Tell me,' she said unexpectedly, 'do you not find that Cissy is getting more and more like Adela ? Of course she'll never be quite so pretty, but she certainly has improved wonderfully, and it's quite the same style of looks, only a shade lighter.'

'Well, and what of that ? '

'I was only thinking, there was somebody in London who liked Adela very much and was awfully cut up because she couldn't manage to like him. He hasn't dropped us quite yet, and I even hear from him sometimes, and now supposing Cissy turns into a second Adela——'

'I see. We'll get a room ready for him at Swanmere. Does he like north or south ? '

'But not until Cissy has gone on improving a little more, and *perhaps* it would be safer to get Adela safely out of the way first. Then, as for Evelyn——'

It was not until plans for Evelyn and Ralph's future had likewise been shaped that Philippa began to feel that she had a right to her happiness ; she knew now that she was not going to be happy alone.

'And for yourself ? ' asked Mr. Dyson, while from between his half-closed eyelids he watched her graceful and ever-moving head which the sunshine had gilded into a semblance of Adela's, 'have you no projects to make for yourself ? no wishes to bring forward ? '

She opened her eyes upon him in astonishment.

'But all this is for myself, of course, since it is for them.'

Mr. Dyson laughed quite gaily. 'The very answer I expected; you haven't an idea how well I know you already. Be warned and never attempt to have secrets from me; I'd see through them far too easily.'

'How could I want to have secrets from you?' began Philippa hotly, and then a little abruptly broke off. At that moment she had recollected that there was one secret between them, one episode in her life of which he knew nothing, and of which she did not believe that she ever could have the courage to tell him. Lately she had been too busy with her happiness to give any thoughts to that rash act in November, which for so long had preyed upon her mind, but at the sound of his words the ghost had started from its grave, and having looked it in the face Philippa knew that her peace could not again be as perfect as it had been until this moment; how could it be, with that dark spot between her and the man she loved with all the ardour of her young and untouched heart?

'You have become wonderfully pensive,' his voice said beside her and she started guiltily, half believing that he had already read to the very ground of her thoughts.

From that moment forward there began for Philippa a period of mental uneasiness which gradually amounted to torture. At night she would fall asleep with the vague hope that the matter would perhaps appear in a different light next morning, and would awake again conscious of some cloud on the horizon, whose form she could not immediately recognise, but which with each day loomed forth more threateningly. The disgrace of what she had done appeared to her ten times blacker than formerly, since she saw in it now not only a want of self-respect but also a treason to the man she loved, now that she knew what it was to love. Ought he not in common truth and justice to know what the woman he was going to marry was capable of? Would he even marry her if he was aware of all? Better, surely, to keep her lips sealed than risk the loss of her whole happiness. Yet even her sealed lips could be no absolute guarantee of oblivion, since she had an accomplice. How terrible was the thought that somewhere in the world, somewhere in England, an unknown man possessed that fatal picture, perhaps still undestroyed, and that one of those queer and unlucky chances of which she had

heard and read so often might show it her again—in a stranger's hands !

With such intensity did these doubts and fears and alarms weigh upon Philippa that she began to come down to breakfast with heavy eyelids and bloodless lips. In proportion to its vehemence the struggle could only be short ; and whereas she had begun by imagining that she could keep her secret a very few days convinced her that the feat was above her strength.

It was one day at Swanmere where all three sisters were spending the afternoon in order to inspect Philippa's future home, which of course was also to be theirs, that she suddenly found courage to risk everything.

They had been all over the house and gardens, the day was warm, and Philippa, tired with admiring and questioning, was resting in one of the low, deep chairs of the smoking-room. For the first time that afternoon she was alone with her betrothed, for Mrs. Dyson, who always did the right thing at the right moment, had taken the girls off to the conservatory. Reposing in that delightful easy-chair, with the signs of comfort and luxury all around her, her head full of all the exquisite things she had seen, and which were so soon to be hers, with the man she was learning to love better every day sitting at two paces from her and seeking to meet her eyes, a sudden feeling of desperation came over Philippa. No, it was impossible to bear so much happiness so long as that black cloud stood between them, to be believed in, to be trusted so entirely, and to know herself a fraud all the time.

'Christopher,' she said abruptly, almost shrilly in the silence of the room, 'we cannot go on like this ; you shall know the truth to-day, whatever happens afterwards.'

'The truth about what ?'

'About myself, of course.'

He looked across at her, momentarily startled.

'Have you hidden anything from me ?' he asked quickly, and more sternly than she had thought he could speak, although she already knew that he could be stern. Her heart sank at the tone, but nothing could make her now recoil.

'Yes, I have hidden something. You see it is not true that I cannot keep secrets from you, for I have kept this : perhaps you will not be able to forgive me, but it is better that you should know it now when you still have time to break with me, if you think that it is too bad to be got over. Do not look at

me so hard, Christopher, or I will never have courage to speak. I once did something that I am sure you will think dreadful, because I think it dreadful myself. Tell me, Christopher, have you ever heard of a matrimonial advertisement ?'

If she had dared to look at him she would have seen how with the last words the strain on his face had suddenly relaxed, while the brown moustache quivered suspiciously.

'I have heard of such things,' he said in his usual voice.

'Then listen, and please don't interrupt until I am done, or I shall never have courage to start over again.'

Leaning back in her chair, with hands tightly clasped over her eyes so as not to see his face, Philippa told him brokenly yet distinctly of that dreadful day in November, and of what it had pushed her to, stating the facts briefly, not extenuating her rashness, and disdaining to apologise for that moment of madness. The last word of her confession spoken she held her breath and listened, waiting, with clenched teeth and set lips, for her sentence. But nothing came, and still nothing came, until after one awful minute she impetuously dropped her hands and looked across questioningly at her judge. To her amazement she met his eyes fixed upon her, full neither of surprise nor horror, but only of a deep, unmistakable compassion.

'You—you don't think it so dreadful ?' she asked in trepidation, not daring yet to believe.

'Poor child !' was all he said ; 'it has been too hard a burden for you ; but, thank God, my shoulders are strong.' And at that moment it seemed to her almost as if that which made the black eyes so bright could only be tears.

'Oh, Christopher, and you mean to say that you can forgive me ? and you don't think me quite vile and horrid ?'

'Not quite,' he said, with a smile that did her more good than the words.

For a minute she sat silent, struggling to recover herself from the shock of relief, then another cloud passed through her eyes.

'But the photograph,' she said at last ; 'that *cannot* be undone ; the thought that it is somewhere loose in the world will never leave me quite in peace.'

'What was the photograph like ?'

'A cabinet picture in riding habit and hat ; and unfortunately very like me.'

Mr. Dyson was sitting near his writing-table ; while she spoke he had half turned in his chair, and, stretching out one hand, had opened a drawer.

'Is this the one by any chance ?' he asked, holding towards her a cabinet portrait.

Philippa, amazed, took the picture and stared at her own face, then back again at his.

'I don't understand ; I did not give you this ?'

'Don't be too sure of that. Look at the back.'

She turned it round mechanically and saw that close to the top something had been written, and then scratched out, evidently with a not over-sharp knife. The photograph she had sent to the *Times* had borne a date at the back, having originally been destined for some London friend ; she could distinctly remember the feverish haste with which she had eradicated it on the fateful morning, and recognised even the shape of the scratch.

'Then you mean to say——'

'I only mean to say that matrimonial advertisements, although not a thing I approve of generally, *may* have their use in life,' said Mr. Dyson, with his usual equanimity.

'To put the matter in a nutshell,' pronounced Cissy, when summing up events later on, 'it was London that did it, after all ; because, don't you see, if we hadn't gone to London we'd never have spent the money, and if we'd not spent the money you'd never have been desperate enough to answer that advertisement, and if you hadn't answered the advertisement Mr. Dyson would probably never have looked at you twice, nor remembered your face a bit better than he did after the Drawing Room.'

And Philippa could not but assent.

(Concluded.)

WOMEN OF OTHER NATIONS.

VI.—SPAIN.

ONE of the few women writers modern Spain possesses, Eimlia Pardo Bazan, declares that, however liberal and advanced the Spaniard of to-day may be in other ways, his ideal of woman is that of a hundred years ago—the Spanish woman of the eighteenth century, who was the most *dévoté*, docile, and ignorant of beings, to whom it was thought dangerous to teach the alphabet lest she should correspond with lovers, whose submission to paternal and conjugal authority was absolute, who never went out except to go to Mass, and who passed her time embroidering and making preserves and sweetmeats. Men still think any expression of opinion or learning in women a grave fault, and are inclined to exclaim, like the father of one who recently asked if Russia was a northern country, ‘Good women have no need to know such things.’ Feminine education is either almost entirely confined to the nuns, who are for the most part, especially in the teaching Orders, bigoted, ill-educated women, looking upon rites and formalism as more important than moral and intellectual considerations, and some of the daughters of the nobility have governesses and masters from France, Germany, and England. Those who engage them have no standard to judge by; they are badly paid, and often very inferior. Women learn to read and write, a little old-fashioned history and geography, a few accomplishments in a superficial way, embroidery, dancing, and deportment, and the nuns certainly teach their pupils charming manners. Anything like serious, deep study is discountenanced—even music and drawing are only looked upon with favour as long as they do not become too serious a pursuit. Elementary schools for girls exist, but they are officered by teachers almost as ignorant as their pupils, and are only to be found in the larger towns. The education given in them is elementary indeed, and two-thirds of the population can neither read nor write. Of late years an

effort to improve the education of women has been made in Madrid, where High Schools have been founded which admit about five hundred girls for courses of training in teaching and professional work. The professors who teach in these give their work almost without remuneration. Schools of art and music have also been founded, and the number of students at them is increasing. In 1881 women were admitted to the lectures at the Spanish universities, and in that year twelve women attended. Since then a good many have passed examinations in medicine and pharmacy, and some are said to be serving in the hospitals of the State. The number of female teachers is increasing, and they now take entire charge of infant schools, besides giving a great deal of musical instruction.

For charm, indeed, the Spanish woman does not rely upon learning; *salada* ('salted') is the word used in Andalusia to express that a woman is beautiful, graceful, languid, fiery. All these the Spaniard often is: she can dance and sing with *verve* and spirit, whether in the street or *café* or in the ball-room, where the introduction of the valse has not chased away the *fandango*, the *bolero*, and the *seguidilla*. As a girl grows up she does not lead the life of a recluse, though she is under the perpetual supervision of her mother, and expected to yield implicit obedience to her father. No woman in the world enjoys herself more while she is unmarried, is a greater coquette, or tyrannises more completely over her suitors. From the time she grows up—that is, about fifteen—until she marries every effort is made to provide her with amusement. Flirtation is a fine art, and the women are more spoiled by flattery than in any other country. All the world is in love, jealous, despairing, or in ecstasies. Every one flirts as much as possible; girls expect to be made love to, and what would be taken for a declaration anywhere else is in Spanish society only looked upon as 'flowers of speech.'

The Spanish girl never goes out alone, but always with her mother or a *dueña*, the offices of whose post provide an occupation for an indefinite number of elderly Spanish ladies, who, dressed in black, with a black lace mantilla, accompany girls, young married women and widows to early Mass, and on the round of shopping which ensues. In the middle, and even in the upper classes the women pass much of the day sitting in long rows at their windows opening on the street,

and at evening courtship is carried on according to immemorial usage by whispers through the window gratings. The rooms open on *patios*, or courts, which are used as open-air drawing-rooms in the hot summer months, roofed with awnings, decorated with plants, furnished with sofas and rocking-chairs, and lit with lamps—the scene of the *tertulias*, or evening receptions, which are the principal institution of southern social life. From the street on summer evenings a passer-by can see into the *patios* and observe the girls, in light dresses, with a scarlet pomegranate blossom or carnation stuck in their shining black hair, swinging lazily in their rocking-chairs, while their admirers fan and whisper to them, and their laughter, their exclamations and piquant phrases fall softly across the hot night air. In one *patio* you may see a pair of girls dancing a *seguidilla*, the castanets clicking over their heads; in others there is singing and guitar-playing, chorussed by the clapping of the company. The open-air life lends itself to frank intercourse between the classes. A young lady sits at her piano, the window open to the street. A working woman passes and calls to the girl. She turns, and asks what she wants. ‘Nothing, *Senhorita*; only I admired your back so much, that I wanted to see what your face was like.’ ‘And what do you think of my face now that you have seen it?’ ‘Like a rosebud, my heart.’ And the damsel smilingly acknowledges the compliment.

The division of classes is little marked in Spain; all ranks of the population are closely in touch, and mutual relations are very cordial; and though a Spaniard may be haughty with strangers, the grandee and the lowest *hidalgo* will greet one another with the universal ‘*caballeros*’ and meet as equals. A lady who lived for months in the houses of two landowners, one in the north and the other in the south of Spain, mentions that in both places when the peasants came to speak to the proprietor about anything, they walked straight into the room where the family were sitting, bowed politely to the ladies, and then quite simply and naturally took a seat. If, as often happened, they came at dinner time, they were offered a place at the table, which, however, they always refused with grave courtesy. They sat perfectly unconstrainedly among the well-dressed party, and when the business with the master was over, would join simply in the conversation before making their graceful bow and departing.

When the Spanish woman marries the duties of a wife and mother absorb her completely. Her life is often almost that of a harem, so jealously is she guarded by her husband. A Spanish proverb says, 'The house is the realm of the wife, and the street that of the husband,' and she is the mistress and arbiter of all that concerns her house and children. Spanish men do not, however, go about much with their wives; you do not see couples arm in arm as in Paris, or driving together as in Italy, but women are becoming more fond of "gadding about"—shopping, visiting, and church-going—and this is one of the changes of recent years.

The few hundreds of the aristocracy who are to be seen luxuriously dressed, whirling through the streets of Madrid in smart carriages and resplendent in diamonds and Parisian *toilettes* at the opera or the races, lead a superficial and frivolous life enough. In 1892 the well-known Jesuit writer, Fra Luis Coloma, created a great sensation by the publication of a book called *Perqueñueces* ('Trifles'), in which with uncompromising frankness he unveiled the follies and vices of the Spanish aristocracy. He does not give an amiable picture of the woman of the highest class. Vanity, self-love, and idleness combine to produce a morally depraved society, cynical and acquiescent in evil; though no one has been able to controvert the picture, which agrees in its main outlines with that supplied by other writers, allowance must be made for the noisy prominence of the inevitable few who here, as in all countries, give perpetual food for scandal, while on the other hand there are numbers of quiet women leading blameless lives, devoting themselves to their homes and their children, while not a few occupy their time in charitable work and even take an interest in literary, artistic, and scientific questions. It has been said that a considerable number of the ladies of Madrid both are and look good, a few are bad, and a great many are really good but have all the appearance of being bad.

The middle class is a very wide term. The wife of a rich banker is middle class, because she is not of the aristocracy, and the wife of the small clerk, because she is not of the common people. The great ambition of the *bourgeoise* is to discard the national dress, to keep a servant and to have a little salon in which to receive visitors, and she would rather be the wife of a struggling clerk with £60 a year than marry a well-to-do artisan or tradesman. The *bourgeoise* is the victim of

appearances, her ideal is to seem what she is not. The interior of a family may be poverty-stricken, but the comforts of life are sacrificed to the *Senhorita's* clothes, the children's linen to a new carpet for the *salon*. Families, the head of which holds some small official appointment, bringing in £120 a year, all told, must go to the theatre and show themselves in the Prado. The father may be shabby and depressed, poor man, with the consciousness that his dinner is cut off, but all the family must be stinted to allow the daughter to make a fine appearance, to attract and to capture. The daughters to whom the wished-for husband fails to come must remain withering under the paternal roof, half starving after their father's death, condemned to poverty and idleness, dependent on doles of help from relations, scraping and screwing in order to present themselves respectably dressed in their narrow round of society. Every Spanish girl requires a dowry, whether she marries or goes into a convent, so that the most strenuous efforts of her parents are devoted to providing for her, and the future of sons is a secondary consideration. A great many women still enter nunneries, some few of which are kept for the high-born only, while in others all classes are mixed ; but the old-fashioned nun who passed her time in prayer and contemplation, and to whom the making of sweets and pincushions was all-satisfying, is giving place to the more practical modern sister who leaves the strictly cloistered life for teaching children, educating girls, and nursing the sick and poor.

Spanish women are as a rule very ignorant in practical matters. They have no knowledge of hygiene and physiology. Their views on cleanliness and fresh air are inconspicuous. They understand how to be smart, but after middle life are apt to sink into negligence and a slipshod style, with ill-kept hands, teeth, and hair, faces without expression, and figures without activity. 'There is so little to say about Spanish women,' said one Englishwoman who knew them well. 'In the small towns they dress and dance and gossip and keep house after a fashion, and spoil their children, and make love and drink in flattery, and in the large towns it is the same thing on a wider and more refined scale.' As might be expected the standard of morality is not very high, a fact which no one deplores more than thoughtful Spanish writers. Even when technically irreproachable themselves they have a very lax standard, especially where men are concerned, and their love of luxury

and idle pleasure leads them to adore money. Women dress richly but not well—except for the mantilla, which unluckily is too often supplanted by modern headgear. Paris dresses Madrid, but the taste of Madrid is not that of Paris. The national dress suited the looks of the Spanish woman far better than Parisian *toilettes*. She is usually small and dark, with a rounded figure, and tiny hands and feet, has large, languishing black eyes with long lashes, magnificent black hair, and a complexion thickly whitened with powder which even the moonlight on summer evenings cannot disguise. You also very often see the long, pale face of Velasquez's portraits, particularly among the higher classes.

The well-known Spanish writer, Concepcion Arenal, when asked if she considered her fellow-countrywomen to be religious, answered that with exceptions she thought them pious, devout, superstitious, but that of the depths and heights of true religion they knew little. The Spanish woman, however, is a believer by instinct, and while a man may become a sceptic or an agnostic, he expects his wife, mother, and daughter to remain devout Catholics. The women go to Mass and their husbands lean outside against the pillars of the porch, waiting for them. Still the priesthood is losing its hold on the nation. Women no longer pay a large amount for indulgences and the priests do not ask in the confessional whether they have attended to this obligation. Though they still have much influence with the higher classes, the middle-class women see less of them, ask their advice less, and they do not interfere in family matters with the old authority. It is almost impossible to make them understand principles to which they are not habituated; what we mean in England by kindness to the dumb creation, for instance. The wife of an Englishman who had lived long in Spain, where she was very popular, set herself a short time ago to start a branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The Spanish ladies with whom she was on intimate terms supported her eagerly, promising their best assistance. She formed several committees and left them to work, but when she presently returned she found them busy getting up a bull-fight in order to raise subscriptions for the society!

The women of the middle classes go little to bull-fights. Many ladies still attend them in the provinces, but they are left chiefly to the women of the people, the *demi-monde*, and those aristocrats who attend because the Queen and Court do so for political reasons.

A married woman has control over her own property ; she keeps her maiden name, and her children are as often called by it as by that of the father. A widow enjoys authority over her children ; divorce does not exist, but a separation may be arranged ; abandonment is very common and there exists no punishment for it. A girl who is a minor may choose a husband, and if the parents refuse their consent she may dispense with it after complying with certain legal forms. On reaching her majority she enjoys the same privileges as men, and, like them, may inherit, will, let, sell or buy. A Spanish woman, if noble, confers her title and the privileges attaching to it on her husband, and some nobles in signing place the initial letter of their wife's name before their own as a sort of chivalrous declaration.

The woman of the people is often very hard working, neat and business-like, full of healthy independence, or again she may be outspoken and witty, impulsive as a child, warm-hearted and full of spirit and intelligence. The women of the Basque provinces are fine creatures—grave, clean and industrious, their purity and fidelity absolute, but they are a race apart, different in descent and in every respect unlike the languid, passionate and irresponsible Spaniard.

All through Spain women help in field work, digging, sowing corn and maize, cutting fodder for cattle. There is much left of the old patriarchal and feudal relation between employer and employed ; old and invalid servants are provided for as a matter of course, nurses and governesses once settled in a family are never discharged. Except in a few commercial centres, women enter little into industrial competition. Some 5,000 women are employed in the Government cigarette factory in Seville. The manager describes them as having the best of hearts and being easily led by kindness, but capable of tearing to pieces any one they think guilty of injustice.

Miss Mary Cameron, in the *Women's Industrial News*, tells an anecdote which shows the enormous difference of conditions between the Spanish women and our own.

It has always been the custom for the mothers to bring their babies with them to the factory and nurse them in the intervals of work ; lately the authorities, wishing to enforce a stricter discipline, forbid these small intruders entrance. Immediately the whole body of women went out on strike and remained out till the obnoxious order was revoked, which was presently

done. Statistics show Spanish home industries, many of which are very beautiful, to be decreasing. In some provinces the packing of dried fruit for export is done by women. This is seasonal, the packing being done in long, open sheds. The workers camp out and the evenings are enlivened by singing and dancing. The women of the lower class are warm-hearted and generous to one another, depriving themselves of the necessities of life to help women in greater need.

The idea of a Spanish woman with any pretensions to gentility doing anything for her living is not to be thought of, if she would not be expelled from the ranks of society to which she aspires. Poverty itself is not as yet a bar to social consideration. The commercial spirit is creeping in, but slowly, and a poor lady of good birth on the days she receives in a little fifth floor apartment, finds the highest *grandees* ready to toil up the long stair, without expecting any refreshments or only of the most simple kind. It is difficult to say what career is open to ladies. There are few authoresses, no opportunities for journalists, no possibilities of study for musicians or artists. Spain is the least progressive of European countries, but the Spanish women would probably say, and not untruly, that they have very happy lives. No spirit of 'divine discontent' has made them restless. Men habitually treat them with devotion and courtesy; even those of the lower class are kind and attentive. Nowhere are women so guarded and cared for. If you have a young servant by the day she will be brought and fetched away by her mother. No girl ever goes as servant to an hotel. Only men serve in the native hotels and married women in those frequented by the English, and everywhere the finer and lighter parts of work fall to their share. No young girl is ever seen begging unless she be a gipsy. There is no great number of superfluous women, and every Spanish man is anxious to marry as soon as circumstances permit. Incomes are minute but living is very cheap. Dancing and flirtation are not expensive pleasures, and a woman has few responsibilities. The Spanish woman loves with southern passion and is correspondingly prone to jealousy. She will make any sacrifice and forgive anything except infidelity—and then the dagger of *Carmen* is no incident of the imagination.

EVELYN MARCH PHILLIPPS.

LORD MUNCASTER'S GULLS.

MANY people who visit the Lake district in Cumberland have heard of, and possibly seen, Muncaster Castle, one mile from Ravenglass. Some who go early in the season have doubtless been entranced with the deep gorge of flaming rhododendrons opposite one part of the grand old Norman tower ; also the half-mile of broad grassy walk ("The Green Terrace") where on one side visitors can see and enjoy one of the finest ranges of the Cumberland mountains ; and close beside them, on the other, a very wealth of lilacs, azaleas, rhododendrons, and many another flowering shrub. The beech-trees wave on the slope below, and blackbirds, thrushes, doves, and cuckoos are all joining in one great chorus, seemingly intent that eye and ear may both be gratified together.

Very different is *another* possession of Lord Muncaster's, also a short distance from Ravenglass, in an opposite direction. No one I have met with seems ever to have heard of it, excepting a Cumberland man who came from that neighbourhood ; and yet the Gull Colony on Digg Warren is 'the largest colony of birds in the United Kingdom.'

We happened during the nesting-time to be staying at Seascale, a charming little watering-place, not far from St. Bees ; and hearing it was close to Ravenglass, of course determined to pay it a visit. We were unsuccessful the first day, as we found the ferryman and his sons had all gone lobster-fishing ; so the next time, having given due notice of our advent, we took the train to Ravenglass, and a warm, still afternoon favoured the expedition.

It was low tide, so instead of going by boat all the way we had to walk across some distance of wet sand before reaching the other side. The keeper meeting us on the shore, we began our walk.

Nothing but dry, loose sand and tufts and hillocks of grass ! It was very slow work plodding through the sand, and not a gull to be seen or heard. At last we came suddenly upon a sort of round amphitheatre in the sandy grass, and with a whirring roar, up flew in a moment thousands and thousands of gulls, screaming, whistling, and circling round and round, sometimes even flapping against our heads, and leaving us to examine their innumerable nests, some of which contained sweet little fluffy, brown speckled young ones, and some the usual three eggs, soon to be hatched out. Care had to be taken not to tread upon them, so thickly did they cover the ground. The Sandwich tern had some of the nests (and further on a small colony of their own), but the majority belonged to the black-headed gull. A little later in the month (May) the keeper said others of the tern tribe came here to lay their eggs.

No one is allowed to fire a shot at these happy birds, so they lead an enchanted life ! I wonder, when their kind protector visits them, if they know him, and give him an extra warm welcome ?

When we left the place they soon settled down again, and silence once more reigned.

Back once more through the sandy grass, covered, however, with lovely little purple pansies, lighting up the otherwise dry and arid soil.

We made friends with many of those dear gulls, on returning to Seascale, by throwing out scraps of bread and meat from the windows. At first they would not come nearer than the road, but gradually they grew bolder, and soon entered the little grass plot, quite close to the door. I often counted thirty or forty of them. I am sure they must have had a sentinel watchman, as whatever hour the food was thrown out (though not one was in sight) directly after they all came flying round. The following verses may close this narration, and were suggested the evening of our visit to the island.

Rise up, merry gulls with a roar
Like the waves of your own blue sea ;
Shake all your white wings in the air,
And whistle, and scream—you are free !

No gun can spread death in your midst,
And bring you a watery grave ;
You can sing your wild songs to the sea,
You are free as the wind and the wave.

Watch over your three pretty eggs,
And think of the bright by and by ;
When those soft little specks of brown 'fluff'
Will be able to circle and fly.

Then scream at the top of your voice,
We know of the joy in your breast ;
You have heaven above, and around,
You have peace, you have calm, you have Rest !

JANET SINCLAIR BERGER.

THE RUNNER.

A SKETCH ON AN ULSTER HILLSIDE.

BY VIOLET HOBHOUSE, AUTHOR OF 'WARP AND WEFT.'

I.

'Thou shalt painfully attain to joy,
While hope and fear and love shall keep thee man.'

THE air was full of the scent of hawthorn. The great straggling branches of the untrimmed hedges were covered with clusters of flowers, the ground underfoot was strewn with fallen petals, the Fairy Tree half-way up the steep grass field was white with a thousand tiny fragrant blossoms. The field, too, was white with innumerable daisies, great and small. The sky beyond was a vivid, cloudless blue.

Johnny McMunn's shock of red hair looked crude and incongruous in all this dainty colouring ; he leant on the gate opening into the daisied field, his arms spread along the topmost rail, careless of the display of ragged sleeves this entailed.

One bare foot was on the ground, the other raised on a bar of the gate. He was of middle height, his figure that of a wiry, active man of about thirty ; his face, as he looked above the snowy blossoms to the sky, might have belonged to a child of seven.

Johnny was not thinking as he waited there ; he smelt the flowers, the grass was cool and sweet to his feet, the air was soft and full of the song of birds ; no one could have been more content with life than he was then, he did not even wish for a new coat.

Presently a girl came towards him across the field, her hair powdered with fallen may. She laughed as she saw Johnny's wide mouth and red head over the gate. She was tall and strong, with a good, homely face, its plainness redeemed by large grey eyes tinged with blue and shaded by dark lashes, and by the sunny sweetness of her smile.

'Why, Johnny ! what brought *you* here ?' she said, as she came near.

Johnny only grinned. His contentment had risen into delight.

'I thoct ye were far enough !' went on the girl. 'What is it you're wantin' now ?'

'Heh—?' said Johnny. 'Wantin' ? A'm wantin' you. Wull ye hae me, Nancy ?'

'Is it marry ye ?' said the girl, with a broad smile.

'Ay,' assented Johnny contentedly. 'That's it. Wull ye hae me ?'

Nancy was carrying a basket of clothes which she was bringing in from the 'whins' where they had been spread to dry. She put it on the ground, stuck her arms akimbo, and laughed.

'What can ye do for a livin', Johnny ?' she asked.

He grinned again, blinking his blue eyes as he looked up at her in the sunshine. 'I can run.'

'Ay—but runnin' is no' like to put clothes on yer own back, let alone mine, poor Johnny,' said the girl, a tone of pity in her laughing voice.

'Oh, I gat money,' said he, standing up and fumbling in the pockets of his tattered coat. 'Gin 'lection times, a heap o' money.'

His search produced a crooked sixpence and three half-pence, which he handed to her with pride.

'That's weel,' said Nancy kindly. 'But ye should gie yer airnin's till yer mother till ye gat a wife. Ye'll be needin' a new coat 'gin the winter comes. Ye should lay it by.'

'Mister Willy's for gie'in' me a new coat come Halla' E'en,' said Johnny, slowly returning the pence to one of the many holes in his attire. The selection was made with care, and was apparently successful.

'Weel, come in the hous' an' gat a bit o' supper,' said Nancy, raising her basket and coming to the gate.

Johnny opened it, but did not attempt to take her basket. Carrying burdens was no part of rustic chivalry as he understood it. He followed her quietly, his bare feet making no slightest sound on the grass edge of the road. As they reached the door of the whitewashed cottage which was Nancy McWhirter's home, he came behind her, and, putting his face close to her ear, said, 'Wull ye hae me ?'

Nancy started ; she had not thought he was so near. 'Ye skeered me,' she said, raising her shoulder as if to ward him off.

'Wull ye hae me?' repeated Johnny in exactly the same voice.

'Och, hould yer whisht, Johnny, an' we'll see !' said Nancy, pushing open the door and entering, followed by Johnny.

She was not bashful about this proposal, which was natural, as Johnny had asked her to marry him at least a hundred times before, but then it did not matter much, for Nancy had known Johnny the Runner since she was a tiny child, and 'what was he but a poor innocent after all ?'

The evening meal was on the table, and the family were all at home—a curly haired boy of two on his father's knee, blissfully sharing his mug of tea and flat home-made 'soda-bread' ; a baby in a wooden cradle rocked by one foot by a child in short petticoats and an enormous blue checked apron ; the mother, and three or four elder children, of ages varying from eight to eighteen.

Johnny slunk in behind Nancy and sat down on a stone seat near the fire.

'Braw evenin', Runner,' said Nancy's father, with a kindly smile. He was very like his eldest daughter, but his face was paler, and his shoulders stooped. He was a weaver, and his life in the low, damp room had told upon him.

Johnny's only answer was another grin. This time it had not the pleased look with which he had greeted Nancy in the field.

Mrs. McWhirter looked round from her seat. 'Gie him a piece, Nancy dochter,' she said, 'an' a drop o' tey. It's a warm evenin'. Are ye dry, Johnny ?'

But Johnny would not speak. He sat apart, silent, yet smiling, munching his bread and sipping his mug of tea, his blue eyes following Nancy as she moved about. Presently she sat down to enjoy her share of the meal.

'Whar' did ye gat yer boy?' asked her brother Sam, a sandy-haired youth of seventeen or thereabouts, who was proud of his wit. 'I'll hould ye, Nancy'll hae a braw weddin' !'

'Ay 'deed !' giggled Minnie over the top of her mug. 'An' a fine hous' an' fixin's. What'll ye hae till yer weddin' coat, Nancy ?'

'I'm thinkin' 'tis post-mistress wud fit ye,' continued Sam. 'An' Johnny could tak' the contrac' frae the mail-car, an' run wi' the letters hissel'. The Queen 'ud be proud to hae him till sarve her !'

Great applause greeted this sally, but neither Johnny nor Nancy took the smallest notice. Johnny was not listening perhaps, and Nancy did not care what Sam said.

'Ye wouldn't hae muckle to pay the shoemaker, Runner, for a' yer runnin',' pursued Sam ; 'yer that clever, ye wear the wan pair o' soles the whole year, and' them not a hair the waur at the end o' it. Mebbe it is in new coats the money goes !'

'Och, thin, quet yer blathering an' let the crathure be !' exclaimed Mrs. McWhirter, rising and shaking the crumbs from her apron into a bucket of scraps for the fowls. "Here, Johnny man, gie me yer coat an' I'll draw it thegither a wee. Never heed them ! It 'ud be tellin' Sam if he'd as quiet, peaceable a tongue in his head, for all he's sae clever !'

But Johnny was stolid ; if he understood Mrs. McWhirter's kindly offer, he made no sign of so doing ; he was staring at the sparks that floated upwards from the small turf fire.

Mrs. McWhirter was not offended ; she was used to Johnny's ways. Her heart was as full of true charity as her purse was empty of gold.

'Here, Nancy,' she cried, 'gie it a stitch or twa ! There's a wee bit cloth ye'll fin' at the back hand o' the drawer, wud mebbe patch it by the elbow. It's no' just the colour, but I doubt it 'ull hae company in that. 'Twas yersel' put a green bit in it no sae long since.'

'Come, Johnny, let me hae yer coat till I fix it a wee,' said Nancy, holding out her hand.

This was quite another matter. He rose meekly, pulled off his coat with care to add no further to its rents, and gave it to Nancy. Then he sat down again in his loose, grey shirt, to wait and watch her as she sewed.

'Whar' did ye come frae the day, Johnny ?' she asked, as she fitted the new patch to the old sleeve.

'Antrim.' Johnny grinned with pride.

'Antrim ! Da, how mony mile is it frae here till Antrim ?' said Nancy, turning to her father, who had filled his pipe, and was leaning back in his chair puffing peacefully.

'It maun be a matter o' fifteen mile frae Antrim till Cullna-

backa' and mebbe seven or eight mile this length—by the road, but I'm no sure. Whar were ye at Antrim, Johnny ?'

'Whar were ye, Johnny ?' Nancy repeated, smiling.

'I was a piece back—at Mr. M'Curdy's o' the Mill. They gie' me dinner !'

'M'Curdy's Mill ? I ken it weel. I worked to a draper that worked to Mr. M'Curdy wance,' said McWhirter. 'It's I dunno how mony mile on the further side o' Antrim.'

'Ye run weel, Johnny,' said Nancy, humouring his evident pride.

'Ay,' said Johnny, 'I never turned a hair.'

'Weel, here's yer coat, an' ye be to go home noo,' said Nancy, handing him his garment, a shade less tattered than before. 'Ye can tak' a piece or two wi' ye. I was bakin' the day, an' mebbe your mother has na' had the time !'

She took two or three thick slabs of fresh griddle-baked bread, and gave them to him. He received them without a word, and hid them in the breast of his coat.

'Good-night, Johnny, an' gude luck to ye !' said McWhirter, rising, his pipe between his lips, and going into the room beyond. In a minute they heard the click, click of the flying shuttle.

The Runner did not move.

'Good-night, Johnny !' said Nancy, standing in the doorway with the evening sun shining on her pleasant face.

Johnny's face was solemn now. His good time was over for the present. He looked at her for a moment with a stolid, blank expression, then turned and ran down the road like a greyhound. In an incredibly short space of time he was out of sight. It was his one talent, and for this he was called 'The Runner.'

A mile or two from the McWhirters' cottage the road is intersected at right angles by a stony track leading across the bog. This track ascends the hill steeply in a straight line east, and once over the crest runs level enough for several miles, banked up on a sort of causeway over the marshy, treacherous parts of the moor. On the western side of this crest, set back a dozen yards or so from this old, disused road, once stood a row of cottages, five or six in number, sheltered a little from the east, but exposed to every other wind that blows.

Perhaps from this reason they had been allowed to fall into

ruin, and now they were nothing more than thin lines of grey stones, overgrown by nettles and rank grass, with here and there a tottering gable, still showing what they had been. Only at the end nearest the old road there was a bit of roof, and the four walls were standing, patched in places, it is true, with green sods of turf. From the tumbled-down chimney a slender curl of smoke ascended, showing as plainly as a flag flaunting from a castle tower that 'the family were at home.' Otherwise a passer-by might have thought the whole row uninhabited—as uninhabitable. Not a single hen picked about the doorstep—indeed, it would have found nothing, had there been one to try; there was not even the usual pot or pan airing in the sunshine. Unlike most of the cottage-doors thereabouts, this one was in a single piece, and was as close shut even this fine evening as its crooked posts and rickety hinges would allow. To this door came the Runner, with his noiseless, flying feet. He stopped and listened with his ear to a hole in the crazy woodwork, then he applied an eye to the same aperture, and finally opening the door about an inch, he whispered, 'Shusy !'

He waited a minute or two, and whispered again, 'Shusy ! Shusy !' Presently he took a glass marble from his pocket and rolled it gently into the hut—for it was little more. This was followed by a scrambling noise inside and a gurgle of soft laughter. The Runner opened the door a little wider and put his arm inside. He drew it out again with a tiny golden-haired child clinging to his hand. Then he shut the door softly; lifting the child into his arms, he ran up the steep grass hillside, the little girl's golden curls resting against his rough, red head, her eyes dancing with delight, her little arm clinging round his neck.

'Nice Johnny !' she cooed in his ear. 'Shusy like yidin' wi Johnny. Johnny yun. Shusy hungry, Johnny !'

When they had reached a bank on the other side of the hill out of sight of either road or cottage, the Runner stopped, deposited his burden on the bank, and stood looking at her, grinning with delight. She sidled up to him.

'Nice Johnny—Shusy hungry,' she said coaxingly.

Johnny put his hand into the breast of his coat and pulled out a small wedge of soda-bread. The child snatched it and ate it greedily. She was a tiny fairy-like creature, with rings of burnished gold clustering all over her head, and large dark-blue

eyes, but she looked delicate and her limbs were pitifully small and thin. When she had finished her morsel of bread she looked up at Johnny as a hungry fledgling might at the mother robin.

The Runner laughed, and stooping down tightened both arms across his chest.

The child stroked his face.

'Nice Johnny. Shusy like Johnny quare an' weel. Shusy hungry.'

Then he broke off another bit of bread, and this process, with occasional variations, continued until Susy had consumed one of the three slabs of bread Nancy had given him.

When it was all gone and Susy saw that no more was forthcoming, she put her two hands together and said, 'Tank Gawd.'

The Runner grinned broadly.

'Johnny say "Tank Gawd,"' she commanded.

He put his hands together as she had done and repeated the words after her.

'Now Shusy'll go home,' said the child. 'Johnny yun.'

'Shusy come wi' Johnny,' he said, in his low, muttering voice. 'Come tae Johnny's hous'. Johnny'll gie Shusy bread tha morra. Johnny'll gie Shusy marvels.'

By this he only meant to dazzle her imagination with the prospect of more little shining glass balls, such as he had given her before.

'Shusy's seepy—wants her ma,' fretted the child. 'Bad Johnny. Shusy's wantin' home.'

When she said 'bad Johnny' his face clouded over like a pond at the first gust of wind. He lifted her without more ado and carried her swiftly down the hill to the door of the cabin. She pushed it ajar, slipped in and the door shut to again.

The Runner looked after her wistfully as she disappeared, like the sun which was even now dropping behind the blue distant hills. Then he turned and ran with his swift, noiseless steps to the old road, and on across the bog towards the group of houses where his mother lived.

As soon as he had left the cabin door, a woman who had watched him furtively through the window, came out and looked after him until he passed the brow of the hill. She held Susy in her arms, though even that light weight seemed too much for her strength.

Her red hair, that had once been golden and silky like Susy's, was rough and thin ; her cheeks pallid and sunken ; her hands, that trembled as she held the child, were dully white and moist. A short, hard cough shook her as she moved. She did not attempt to put the child to bed, but returning to the fireside sat down on a low seat, Susy lying half asleep across her knees. She had first carefully shut the doors, excluding, had she but known it, the fresh, sweet air that might have saved her life. Presently the door opened again, and her husband came in. He was very young—little more than a boy—and walked with slow, lagging steps.

He was carrying a quantity of yellow-brown yarn, which he threw on the single table. 'There, Jenny ; I've windin' for ye till Andrew Dunlop. An' I've a web till weave till him mesel'. I've a taste o' tay an' shuggar an' twa-three bit o' prittafadge. Mebbe ye could ate a bit. I'll hot up a taste o' water in a minute. Hoo's the wean ?'

'The Runner's been,' answered his wife, in her tired voice, as she watched him doing the work that should have been hers. 'He's turble took up wi' Shusy. I think he gie's her things, she's that fond o' him ; an' she was cryin' wi' hunger, but now she's sleepin' fine.'

A dusky flush crept over the young man's pale face. 'I wud think ye'd think mair o' yersel' than let her go wi' the likes o' him !' he muttered, as he stooped over the kettle.

'Deed, wud ye, if the wean was frettin' till ye couldn't please her onyways, an' a minute's peace was mair till ye than bite or sup ?' said his wife, the tears filling her fever-bright eyes ; 'not but I ken weel enough its lettin' mesel' down—the Lord help me ! Och a nee ! a nee ! a nee !'

'Och, dinnae greet, Jenny, poor lass ! it's better ye'll be now the darlin' hot weather's comin'. An' for the Runner, poor crathur, sure 'tisin't many pleasures he has that we need begrudge him Shusy an odd time or so. Here ! tak' yer sup o' tay. It's fine an' hot, an' I'll put the wean to bed. Then I'll see can I wind some o' them bobbins for ye. It's a fine clear night, ye'll mebbe not can wind mony yersel' tha morra.'

II.

Mrs. McMunn was an acknowledged shrew. This gave her a position of some importance among her neighbours, and ?

would rather have her for a friend than an enemy, for she was looked upon as a woman of strength of character, and also of no little wisdom. She had cures for the various ills to which flesh is heir, she could track a strayed animal—if she chose—and tell why the hens would not lay, and it was whispered by the girls that even the future did not puzzle her. The grains in a cup of tea were to her as the stars of the astrologer, and the secrets of destiny were revealed to her by such things as ‘moles’ on the body and ‘clever dreams.’

These gifts at least were attributed to her, for she did not claim to possess them, except in mysterious and veiled refutations of them. Nobody dared to ‘even it to her to be a “spey-wife,”’ as they called one who can see the Future, but there were various more round-about ways of obtaining from her the information wanted. Mrs. Dunlop, for instance, called in one evening with a share of the day’s baking, or perhaps a few fresh eggs, or a paper of tea, and mentioned casually that two of their new black faced-sheep—she called them *brockies*—had strayed; ‘and them being beasts as could lep like hens,’ there was no knowing where they had gone nor how far, or if some one had driven them off.

The next morning Mrs. McMunn returned the visit. ‘She just called in to say, an’ ‘deed mebbe Mrs. Dunlop wud tak’ her for a fule body, that she had dramed terrible strong, an’ ‘deed she dramed she saw Mrs. Dunlop’s brockies grazin’ their fill in one o’ the Ballorna plantin’s, an’ it ‘ud be the quare pity o’ them if ‘twas the land-steward foun’ them there, for they did say he thought a heap o’ the bushes an’ things in them plantin’s. But Ballorna was a good piece away, an’ mebbe ‘twas the tea she had hadn’t agreed wi’ her inside.’

Needless to say Robert Dunlop lost no time in reclaiming his lost property ‘unbeknownst,’ while Mrs. McMunn’s reputation and her store of worldly goods increased, and her son rested during the day to make up for the night’s exertions.

Mrs. McMunn’s only ostensible mode of living was by winding bobbins for those of her neighbours who were weavers, and who either had no children to wind for them, or could afford to send their children to school and pay for a substitute. For that parents must weave and children must wind is an acknowledged state of things in this country, until recently unthreatened by compulsory education, where almost every cottier-house holds at least one loom, and where the

long brown webs of linen, from the coarsest kind woven by beginners to the finest work of skilled hands, are turned out by hundreds of men and women, year in year out.

By every river flows some silent mill-lead turning the great dark wheel that works the 'beetles,' as the machinery is called, where the bleaching and polishing is done; where the dull brown-yellow webs are received, to be sent away in course of time, white and shining like snow in sunshine.

But as neither winding nor witchcraft are very lucrative occupations nowadays, the McMunns, mother and son, sometimes found it difficult to get food and firing, not to say new clothes, and these times would have been hard indeed had it not been for that wonderful surpassing charity which the poor on these northern hills show to each other.

The neighbours thought Mrs. McMunn entitled to a special share of their substantial pity, for was she not 'afflicted by the Almighty in the matter of her son, who was nothin' more than a poor innocent since the day he was born, the crathure; an' had no wits at all to speak of, only in his feet?' Some there were who said that Johnny's foolishness was a just punishment for his mother's league with the Power of Darkness; 'an' deed, when ye come to that, there was them too as counted Johnny McMunn mair knave than fule.' But from one reason or another, though the two met with much kindness, they had few friends, and lived a lonely, separated life. Their cottage was but a stone's throw from Dunlop's farmhouse, or, rather, their portion of the cottage, for they lived in a room at the end of a labourer's house, but as their door was in the gable-end, and the larger house door at the side, they were fairly isolated. Their end of the cottage faced west and looked towards the wide, sweeping lines of bog and hill. The Runner sat there on the doorstep looking vacantly at the shifting clouds that peopled the wide sky, and listening to a lark that was singing somewhere out of sight. The preceding night had been bright with an unclouded moon, and he had had a long run on an errand of his mother's and only returned with the dawn. His mother was at home now, and a woman was with her who had come to ask advice about some ailment of her child's. The warm air felt comfortable, the scent of the thorn hedge near by, thick with blossom, reminded him vaguely of Nancy and his happy times; he sunned himself and smiled. He felt like Susy when she said 'Tank Gawd.'

He heard the voices of the two women in the cottage, but without heeding their words. They were discussing a recent death and consequent wake.

'Dear oh !' said Sally McAnnally, the visitor, 'it's a turble heap o' trouble for a body to be left all of a sudden. He was well enough in the mornin' 'takin' his meat fine an' sayin' he was minded to tak' the twa young heifers to Ballymena agin market-day, when, dear oh ! he was took—all of a heap, an' niver said another word.'

'An' what was it the doctor ca'd thon disease that took him?' asked Mrs. McMunn. 'Was it the Sweemmin's?'

'No; the doctor said it was a perplexity he died o', answered Sally, proud of superior knowledge. 'Did ever ye hear tell o' thon?'

'Mony's the time,' said Mrs. McMunn, shaking her head wisely and breathing with a sort of whistling sound through her nose, indicative of sympathy. 'It mostly takes 'em sudden, them big red lusty strong yuns, ye'd think wud tak' a heap o' killin'—wi' doctor's stuff an' all,' she added, with a sniff of contempt for the regular practitioner. 'But a perplexity just does it at wanst: you're here and then you're there—th' Almighty save us! But I declare, Sally McAnnally, you're turned as whitely as a baker's loaf, though it's mysel' has near forgot the look o' yun !'

'Och, it's just the feelin' heart I hae !' said Sally, drinking largely from the bowl of spring water Mrs. McMunn held to her lips, 'an' the hotness o' the weather mebbe, for it's a bye ordinary year, althegether, so it is. It's fine an' dry the turf will be, the Lord be praised ! that we'll no be needin' thon dirty black coal, ye canny touch it wi'out its blackin' the finger on ye ! James Fagan was busy carrying yesterday, and McWhirter was working till him. Did ye hear his Nancy is for gettin' marrit?'

'An ye tellin' me?' said Mrs. McMunn sagely, as if it was no news. 'An' who did ye hear she was for marryin'?'

'They say it's young Andy O'Neil frae Ballintoy down bye, that's carpenter at the green——'

But she ended her sentence with a shriek.

The Runner, who had sprung up from his seat on the doorstep, now stood close to her, his blue eyes glaring angrily, and his fists clenched.

'You're lyin' !' he shouted ; 'you're lyin' ! you're lyin' !'

He strove to find words to reproach her with—words to express the tumultuous feelings which rose up somewhere within him, and seemed to beat loudly in his brain, clamouring for utterance, but he could find none. His face worked frightfully in his dumb excitement, he grew hot and cold, and then knew he wanted to kill Sally McAnnally—that was all; and his poor fool's face showed all he thought, so that it was no wonder Sally shrank back terrified and called aloud.

The Runner was between her and the door; in any case she could not have escaped from him by flight.

Mrs. McMunn threw her arms round her son, pressing his rough, red head against her breast.

'Whisht, whisht, sonny! what is she but an ould fule-body haverin' about what she knew nothin' o' ava? Whisht, whisht, you're my gude son! Isn't it your ain mother that kens a' them things, an' didn't I see in a fine drame that it wasn't Andy O'Neil Nancy was marryin' at all—never heed her! Come, Johnny, sit down there peaceable like a gude son, an' I'll get ye a piece an' a taste o' fine hot prittas that'll hearten ye up, an' get Mrs. McAnnally her bottle, for it's gettin' on, and the men's comin' frae the moss till their dinners.'

Johnny gave a deep, shuddering sigh, and allowed his mother to push him gently on to a stool by the fire. His head sank on to his hands and he sat there motionless, refusing the food his mother tried to tempt him with.

'What ails ye, Johnny love?' she asked him; 'what ails ye, darlin'?'

But Johnny did not know. The wild hammers were going in his head again, and the clouds seemed to be flying round his feet. He too must fly; he was so light, he must go bounding, bounding over the hills, away—away—

Without a sound he pushed his mother's arm aside and fled out across the moor.

III.

Johnny had a long run that day: over the bog and up the hill past the grey cromlech on the heights, the Broad Stone where he had seen poor Belle McKeown wandering, gathering the flowers she loved. He did not like poor Belle, with her sad eyes and black hair; she made him feel strange and uncomfortable himself; he liked bright, cheerful people like Nancy

and littly Susy, his two friends. So he ran on without speaking to Belle or to any one—down the hill, over the green fields, under the moving skies, with the freshening wind in his face, till he came to the river. On the bridge he stopped and forgot all about time and trouble and even running, watching the broad sweep of the water gliding under the arches, away between its green banks to the sea. He would go too—that way; he would race with the water; nothing could go so fast as he, not even the clouds—he knew, for he had raced *them* often, and always won; away he went northwards along the river bank, and every now and then he laughed aloud thinking that he was gaining on the water. The west wind was racing with them too, and up it came rushing, carrying great black cloud-banks on its back which burst in heavy rain storms, drenching Johnny's thin clothes and dripping from the brim of his old hat. It was dark; the sun had gone, the moon did not rise then till late, but every now and then the lightning leapt from one cloud bank to another, and the thunder rolled and grumbled overhead. Johnny did not like thunder, it frightened him, but he loved the bright, vivid light that leapt and played in the dark sky. He forgot about the river and the race seawards, as he watched the storm; he turned and ran on and on without thinking where he went.

There must have been, as the poet sang once, a spirit in poor Johnny's feet, for by and by he found himself, shivering, wet, and cold, standing under the thatched eaves of Nancy McWhirter's home.

He sat down on the doorstep, leaning back against the door, motionless as a carved figure, until the wind sank and the moon rose, and the raindrops fell with a monotonous low patter on leaves and grass. The May blossoms fell thickly under the relentless assault, lying crumpled and tarnished but still sweet, filling the damp air with their fragrance.

At last the moon in turn vanished, and the sun rose, but the rain still fell, a grey veil over everything.

There were sounds of life within the house: some one moving about in the kitchen, a crackle of bog-wood as it kindled from the embers of the last turf fire; children's voices, a man's steps, a girl's clear singing as she went about her work.

A smile shone out on Johnny's poor grey face.

He rose and peeped in at the kitchen window, and stood as

it were glued to the wet panes, until some one within caught sight of him, and cried out, startled.

In a minute the door was opened and Nancy looked out.

'Whar is it, Johnny?' she called; 'is ony thin' wrong wi' ye' or wi' yer mother? It's starved wi' cold ye are, an' fairly drowned forbye! What ails ye at all, Johnny, man?'

Johnny bent towards her eagerly, and said in his quick, low mutter, 'Nancy, wull ye hae me? Wull ye, Nancy?'

Nancy's kindly face grew dark. She was very angry, and at the same time a little bit afraid of showing it, but she must teach Johnny to behave better.

'Come in here out of the rain,' she said to him, not unkindly, but he saw her displeasure in her face, and shook his head.

'It's drippin' like a drooned cat ye are,' she added; 'come in this minute an' dinna kape me standin'. I've enough to do forbye at this hour.'

But Johnny would not move.

'Look ye here,' said Nancy more severely, as she saw a sullen look on his face, 'ye should be ashamed o' yersel' talkin' like thon an' runnin' out at siccan a time o' night an' gettin' drookied like a mill-wheel, till ye'd drown the very river itsel' if ye stood in it. Go home, Johnny, to yer mother, an' she'll dry yer duds till ye an' mak' ye mair like a decent Christian. An' deed ya maun just quet yer foolishness, lettin' on aboot bein' marrit. Havers! an' nothin' else. I'm fairly 'shamed o' ye!'

The Runner stood quiet and listened. Dark, very dark, were the clouds that seemed to surge up round him, but the black rage could not rise against Nancy any more than the fleeting shadows quench the light. He could not speak, but stood there on the doorstep and let the world swim round him as it would.

As ill-luck would have it Sam appeared then grinning behind Nancy's shoulder. He pushed her back, and came towards the Runner, saying mockingly—

'Mornin', Johnny! I suppose ye heard our Nancy had tired waitin' on you, an' 's for marryin' another boy agin the 12th! Eh, but ye'll come and dance at the weddin', Johnny. Mebbe your frien' Mister Willie wud gie the new coat now instead o' Halla E'en if ye asked him perticler. Lord save us!'

He ended with a loud curse, for Johnny had struck out right from the shoulder, and Sam measured his length on the kitchen floor. Before he could rise again the Runner was out of sight.

IV.

'Away out o' me sight this minute ! What gars it ye standin' there wi' the two eyes o' ye blinkin' like a dunkey ? As shure as my name is Martha McMunn I'll lift the creepy to ye if ye dinna go !'

Mrs. McMunn stood on her doorstep waving the 'creepy,' a diminutive stool, in the air as she spoke. Her thin, grey hair blew about her ears, her eyes and voice were fierce.

The girl she was driving away looked bewildered by her sudden onslaught ; but she stood her ground though without attempting to speak.

'It's fine to see ye speerin' after what ye can mebbe mak' a laugh out o', you an' yer sistur an' her boy ! Ay, 'deed, th' Almighty reward ye ! Away wi' ye for an ugly girnin' hussy, an' may the deil himsel' match ye ! Ay, ay ! yees hae'in a father an' a fine hous' an' all ye think to put yer feet upon a poor widow woman an' the likes o' them ye think canny help themselfs.'

Not for worlds would Mrs. McMunn have said more than this concerning her son's deficiency. 'But I'll put ye frae pokin' yer nose where you're no needed, speerin' after them as dunna consarn ye !'

Here the 'creepy' was lifted once more so threateningly that Minnie McWhirter, for it was Nancy's sister, fled without further effort to deliver her message whatever it was.

After she had disappeared round the corner of the house, Mrs. McMunn still stood more feebly waving the 'creepy' and muttering to herself words evidently uncomplimentary to Minnie and Nancy and girls in general. Mrs. Maley, her neighbour, hearing the noise, had crept to the corner and peered round. She retired precipitately reporting that 'ould Martha was swearin' awfu', an' givin' wee Minnie lip up an' down, never thinkin' on the Day o' Judgment ! Dinna go near her, Mary dear, she's fit to pull the eyes out o' ye when she's angered.'

The woman she spoke to was on her way to McMunn's house. She was a small, faded creature, with a white face and large grey eyes ; her sandy hair was streaked with grey, and she walked with a stout stick almost like a crutch. She was lame. Her dress was poor, but scrupulously clean ; there was something about her whole otherwise insignificant person that spoke

of calm, almost dignity. Her smile was sunny and lit up her plain features with a kind of spiritual beauty.

'Poor Martha!' she said softly. 'I don't doubt but she needs comfortin'. Thank ye, Mrs. Maley, mebbe I'll call in goin' home if I've time.'

Mary Catherwood limped on dauntlessly, not fearful for her welcome, for wherever there was sickness or suffering or sorrow her gentle presence was hailed with joy. When she saw her new visitor Mrs. McMunn dropped the stool and stopped muttering.

'Good mornin', Martha,' said Mary in her gentle voice. 'I heard your son was lyin' wi' a fever, quare an' bad, an' I thought mebbe ye'd let me sit by him a wee. Ye'll have a heap to do, an' it puts ye about quarely to think o' him his lone, I mak' nae doubt.'

'Eh, the Lord Almighty bless ye, Mary Catherwood, for a gude Christian body,' faltered Mrs. McMunn. 'Ay, 'deed, he's took turble bad wi' the pains till whiles he lots srieks out o' him ye'd hear far enough, an' whiles he'll lie sae quite ye'd think 'twas nothin' but a corpse he was already, the poor boy, an' him not knowin' day nor night, nor bad nor good, till the next world comes. Eh dear! Come in, come in, it's the like o' you as is quarely welcome. Sure, hasn't th' Almighty afflicted ye yersel'?''

Mary sat down on a stool beside the darkened bed where the Runner lay; he had been ill for ten days with a touch of rheumatic fever, and all that time no one but his mother had come near him, she watched him with such jealous care. The neighbours had brought offerings from their store of food, and would have helped to nurse, but Mrs. McMunn admitted none beyond the door, until Mary Catherwood came; but Mary was different, her sweet face served her instead of a Sister's habit.

The two women talked in whispers for a little, till the sick man grew restless and moved his head from side to side, moaning and muttering unintelligibly.

Mary laid her cool hand on his forehead, and smoothed the pillow and tossed bed coverings. His mother watched but did not interfere.

'I'll read ye a piece,' said Mary, reseating herself. 'The blessed words will mebbe soothe ye; so lie at peace, an' mebbe ye'll can fall asleep.'

She spoke to the son, but it was of the poor mother that she thought most. With an intense love of the mysterious and beautiful, and conviction of its literal truth, she read the two last chapters of the Revelation of St. John, slowly and with dramatic emphasis that impressed her hearers, though it might have offended a more critical audience.

Even to the Runner's clouded intelligence some idea was conveyed of the beauty and wonder of that unknown land. Mary saw his eyes fixed upon her as she read, and when she closed the worn little Testament she carried, she went on telling him in simple, expressive language of the Home of Glory 'beyond the clouds.' She thought partly of the clouds that darkened poor Johnny's mind, but he understood her literally, and looked up at the smoke-begrimed roof as if he expected to see beyond it the moving masses of white and grey that he loved, perhaps to see them too roll back to let him catch a glimpse of what Mary Catherwood assured him lay beyond.

'I'll get there some day,' he said suddenly.

'Oh yes, Johnny, when the Lord wills,' Mary answered.

'I'll beat the clouds! Ha! ha! ha! I'll run—run—faster—an' get round the—ah——' He had started up in his excitement, and fell back now with a groan.

'You cannot run there, Johnny,' said Mary, her pitying eyes resting on him; 'but if you love the Lord Jesus He will take you there when you die. They will put your body in the grave, but the beautiful shining angels will carry your soul to Heaven's blessed home.'

Her voice soothed him, though most of what she said made no more impression on him than a butterfly's flight on the air. Yet when she left he kept thinking of the 'golden glory, and the music and the shining angels with great white wings.' They were blurred pictures of brilliant sunsets, strange sea-birds, and songs of the larks.

Mary had sung to him in her sweet, quavering treble of the 'Happy land, far, far away,' but she said the music there would be far more beautiful, so he remembered the larks singing out of sight and believed her.

And all the succeeding days of his convalescence Johnny thought of these things, but with ingratitude characteristic of man his vision of an angel had Nancy's face, and not Mary Catherwood's.

V.

It was some time after Mary's visit, and the Runner was once more able to move about under the free sky he loved so dearly.

He had been several times to see Susy, and repeated the scene already described down to the minutest detail, except that he tottered up the hill at first, instead of running, thereby incurring the child's sore displeasure. But she had learnt that when she called him 'Bad Johnny' he took her home at once, and would not play with her again that day, so she generally retained expressions of wrath until the inevitable feast was over, thereby showing wordly wisdom beyond her years. But once the ceremony of thanksgiving concluded, she did not scruple to reproach him for his weak knees and feeble pace.

'Bad Johnny—*yun*, *yun* quick! Shusy no love Johnny any more, no like Johnny *ava*.'

Great was their mutual joy when one day Johnny tore round the hill with her at something like his old pace, though he was soon obliged to sit down and rest, while Susy decorated his red locks with dandelions, and delighted him by clapping her hands and shouting, 'Pretty Johnny! quare an' pretty Johnny!'

He had not yet since his illness gone so far as the McWhirters' house, and none of the family had seen him since Minnie's discomfiture. His mother had not been able to keep it from his hearing that Nancy was soon to be married, though she had tried to banish the subject since she had found out how much it excited him.

He never spoke of it himself, but was more sullen and taciturn than ever, sitting at times for hours without moving or speaking. His mother thought it was because he was unable to take the long wild runs which were his only pleasure. They were a grim pair in that little smoky house—Johnny motionless by the fire, his mother at the doorway with her flying wheels, as she wound the never-ending yarn upon the bobbins.

One day his mother had gone to the shop, about a mile away, for some meal and tea and sugar, and the Runner sat alone, amusing himself sometimes by stirring the turf with his bare toe, so that he might watch the sparks fly upwards. He knew nothing of their connection with man's trouble, and was spared the pain of moralising.

A shadow fell on the earthen floor from the darkened doorway ; it was Minnie McWhirter.

Seeing that he did not move the girl took courage and came in.

'Oh, Johnny,' she cried, 'Nancy's ill ! She's turble ill, turble bad ! Oh, Johnny, she said as how you'd run for the doctor for her if ye knew, an' I come, though I was quare and feared. Johnny ! Johnny !' she called louder, as he did not move. 'Oh, Johnny, don't ye heed me ? Nancy's ill, our Nancy, an' she maun hae the doctor, an' there's naebody can run wi' you, Johnny dear, barrin' the hares. Och, Johnny, for the love of Heaven will ye run to Portglenone, for if ye dinna get there till after twelve o'clock he'll maybe be away. Do ye mind me ? Do ye heed what I'm sayin', Johnny ? Och, an' you that was sae big frien's wi' Nancy, wad ye no' run a mile or twa till save her life ?'

He had not moved while Minnie spoke ; thoughts that seemed to crush him moved somewhere in his brain. At last he turned to Minnie with a strange gleam in his eye.

'Ye go to glory when ye die,' he said suddenly. 'Golden glory an' music ! An'—I'll be there !'

Minnie sprang from him with a cry. 'Och, Johnny, what gars it ye bein' sae onkind ? Its wicked—wicked !' and the frantic girl tried every argument she could think of to induce him to go, while the precious moments were flying and soon it might be too late. She had the message for the doctor ready written out. They could not trust Johnny's memory to deliver a verbal request. But he was obdurate, and only now and then shook his head and grinned. At last an inspiration came to Minnie.

'Johnny,' she said slowly, 'Nancy bid ye go. Nancy bid me tell ye to run at once wi' this letter till the doctor's in Portglenone, and she'd be guy and conceity wi' ye.'

Minnie thrust the letter into his hand as she spoke. 'Nancy bids ye go. Och, Johnny, but ye run weel. There isn't a beast or bird about the place can beat ye.'

He looked uneasily round and half rose from his seat. Minnie pushed him gently forward and out of the door. 'Away !' she whispered ; 'brave Johnny ! Ye maun run yer best—fast—fast——' and then as she saw him speed away with flying, noiseless feet, poor Minnie sat down on the doorstep and burst into tears ; but she did not linger there many

minutes ; anxiety to reach home again and the fear of old Martha both urged her departure.

And the Runner ? It seemed to him as if he had never run so well before. The hills rolled away from under his feet, great tracts of sky were left behind. He should soon get to glory at that pace, round the edge of those shifting white masses that rested on those hills—not so very far off. He would deliver his letter first, and then—away ! away ! The clock struck twelve as he stood peering in at the dispensary window. The gig was at the door, and in a minute the doctor came out of the house and put his foot on the step of the trap, preparatory to mounting. The Runner thrust the letter into his hand, and was off down the broad street towards the river, like a hare before the hounds.

The Runner returned home at nightfall, for glory was hard to get to, and the forces of hunger impelled him homewards. He did not notice that his mother was solemn-faced and quieter than usual, but she was ; she looked awed, like a prophetess of evil whose prophecies have astounded her by coming true.

A few days after Johnny was once more leaning against the wall of the McWhirters' cottage. He looked perhaps a shade thinner and grayer in the face, his garments more tattered, his old felt hat more entirely without shape. This time he was not alone, a group of men in black coats stood near. One of them wanted to force Johnny and his grin out of sight as unseemly.

'Let him be,' said McWhirter brokenly, 'let him be.' He looked aged, and his eyes were red and swollen. Presently the minister came out of the house, a thick white linen scarf across his chest tied under one shoulder ; then a coffin was carried out and placed on a hearse that stood waiting, and the mournful procession moved away. The McWhirters were Presbyterians, and the funeral service had been conducted, as usual with them, in the house.

Johnny slunk after them by himself, his bare feet following lightly on the stony road. He was still grinning broadly.

He stood apart watching them, and giving no sign except one gurgling sort of cry when the first spadefuls of earth

sounded on the coffin lid. He hid behind a tree when the group round the grave began to break up and go home, but when all were out of sight he crept up to the newly made grave and lying down laid his cheek against the moist red earth.

'Yer no marrit, Nancy,' he whispered, 'yer gone tae glory, an' I'm comin' by another way, I can run that weel.'

Big tears were streaming down his face, his voice came in gasps, something he did not understand seemed to tear him inwardly. Presently he looked up; the sun was shining through a rift in the great grey bank of clouds, crossing the gloom in a slanting beam of light.

'Yer gone tae glory, Nancy, an' ye'll hae me there, ye'll hae me there,' he said and smiled.

Then, kneeling on her grave, he put his hands together as Susy had taught him to do and said—

'Tank Gawd.'

RECTOR, VICAR, AND CURATE.

THE question is often asked, What is the difference between a Rector and a Vicar? Few people ever ask, What is the difference between a Vicar and a Curate? And as for a Parson, every one thinks he knows what he is : he is a person who wears a white tie and preaches on Sundays. It may therefore be surprising to many to learn that not one of the four terms is now used in its original meaning. Vicar and Curate have practically almost changed places, while Parson, which is simply the old word for Rector, has come to mean any minister of religion whatever, whether he holds any parochial office or no. A Rector, again, must originally have been a clergyman, but now many Rectors are laymen.

It is not altogether easy to explain the meaning of these words as they were first used in the Church of England, and to show how these meanings were gradually modified in process of time without falling into mistakes, especially if one has to write with but few trustworthy works of reference at one's elbow. To give a thoroughly accurate account of the two words Vicar and Curate, for example, however simple it may appear, requires considerable historical research and access to a good library. In this little paper it is not pretended to do more than sketch a general outline, which will, it is hoped, be found accurate in all main features, but which, from lack of knowledge and of opportunities, may contain errors of detail.

Perhaps it is best to begin with the distinction between a Rector and a Vicar as those terms are commonly used in our own days. Attention must first be drawn to the important fact that a large proportion of parishes throughout the country, and by far the great majority in certain neighbourhoods, are what are called New Parishes, having been constituted quite in modern times. In the great towns and thickly populated districts the few are ancient parishes and the many are new parishes ; but of course in other parts of the country the

contrary is the rule. The ratio of old parishes to new in the country at large is roughly about two to one. We have to fix it in our minds that it is with the ancient parishes only that we have at present to do. The clergymen who have the cure of souls in ancient parishes are Rectors or Vicars in a strict sense ; while in the case of clergymen who have the charge of new parishes, although they are usually styled Vicar, or in some instances, Rector, yet the title is, so to speak, a title of courtesy, as will soon be further explained.

Ancient parishes may be defined for our purpose as those which were in existence as separate parishes at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539. In the old towns, and generally in the earlier settled and wealthier parts of the country, they were numerous and small in area ; in the then barren tracts of Lancashire and the West Riding they were few and sometimes enormous in extent. The parish of St. Mildred, Bread Street, in the City of London, covers an acre of ground ; the parish of Whalley, in Lancashire, covered some two hundred square miles. It happens that St. Mildred's is a rectory and Whalley is a vicarage. We want to know how this comes about. The simplest way to put it is that the Rector of St. Mildred's receives the whole of the ancient endowments of that parish, but the Vicar of Whalley receives only a part of the ancient endowments of his parish. As a short way of stating the matter we may say of all old parishes that if the clergyman receives all the endowment, he is a Rector ; if he receives only part, he is a Vicar.

But then in the case of a vicarage where does the rest of the money go to, and how did it come to be alienated from the parish clergyman ? To answer this question we must go back to the time when abbeys and priories were at the height of their popularity in this country. These, as is well known, were societies of men, or sometimes of women, who lived together for purposes of piety and good works, and were bound by a strict rule. As these brotherhoods increased in number and in favour, it became a common practice not only to endow them as a new parish may nowadays be endowed, but also to make over to them the existing endowments of existing churches, merely binding them to provide for the performance of Divine Service, and for some measure of pastoral oversight. Sometimes the priest who took charge of the parish was one of the monastic body ; but this not

being found to work very well, he was oftener a secular priest (which means a priest who was not also a monk or canon), engaged at a certain stipend. After a time it became usual to compel the religious houses which had livings appropriated to them to pay out of the revenues a fixed proportion to the parish priest who took the duty.

In this we have the origin of vicarages. It would not be wise to speak too decidedly, but it may be assumed that all parishes were once rectories—that is, the priest who held the benefice received the whole of the endowment. When a benefice was appropriated to an abbey or priory, that monastic house became Rector of the benefice, and the priest who actually performed the parish work was called a Vicar, which means a deputy. Then when Henry VIII. dissolved the monasteries and confiscated their revenues, he did not restore to the parishes those endowments which had been originally theirs; with some he founded a few new bishoprics; some he gave to places of education; most of them he gave or sold to his creatures. And thus it has happened that the Rector of a parish may be a layman who enjoys part of the Church property of a parish, while the parish priest, the Vicar, has the remainder. In all old vicarages, therefore, there is always a lay-rector, who may be a private person or a corporation, who receives some part of the original endowment. To explain which part is allotted to the lay-rector and which to the clerical vicar would entail a needless excursion into the history of tithe. Nor, again, must it be assumed as an absolute rule without exception that all ancient benefices which are now vicarages were formerly appropriated to a religious house. That was the usual rule, beyond a doubt; but occasionally they were appropriated to bishoprics, and inquiry would probably show other exceptional cases.

There is next to be explained the position of the incumbents of new parishes, who have for the most part the title of Vicar, though some have that of Rector; but this cannot well be done until we have made some examination into the meaning and history of the word Curate. In most parishes where there are two clergymen at least, one is the Rector or Vicar, and the other is popularly called the Curate. It is our first business to show that the latter is not the Curate at all.

The Curate of a parish is the clergyman to whom has been committed the cure of souls in that parish. Cure of souls

means care or charge of souls. The charge of every parish is solemnly committed by the Bishop to a certain clergyman, and that clergyman is by consequence the Curate of the parish. If we look at any parish that we know and ask ourselves, Which of the clergy working in it has had the charge of the parish committed to him ? the answer is, The one whose more ordinary title is the Vicar. The Rector or Vicar of a parish, if he be resident, as all are with but few exceptions, is strictly and properly the Curate of the parish. But what then of the so-called Curate ? He is in reality the assistant Curate—the priest who helps the real Curate in the execution of his duties. If we were to go back to using the words Vicar and Curate in their original meaning, which we shall never do, very probably, we should exactly transpose their modern use. We have seen that the meaning of Vicar is deputy. The word deputy almost precisely describes the relation of an assistant Curate to a Curate (commonly called a Vicar). So that we arrive at this state of affairs—that the clergyman ordinarily styled the Vicar is strictly the Curate ; and the clergyman commonly known as the Curate is in reality the Curate's Vicar.

Those who have a pleasure in knowing the Prayer Book will recall many places which prove what has been said. For instance, at the end of the preface *Concerning the Service of the Church* it is ordered that 'the Curate that ministereth in every Parish-church or Chapel' shall daily say the Morning and Evening Prayer. This cannot mean the Curate in our modern sense—that is to say, the assistant Curate, because (1) even now it is not every parish church which possesses an assistant curate, and (2) assistant Curates did not exist when the preface was written, much less when the Prayer Book was last revised in 1662. But a more familiar instance is the prayer for the Clergy and people, heard at least once every Sunday, in which God is besought to send down the Spirit of His grace upon all Bishops, and Curates, and all Congregations committed to their charge. Unless we know what Curates are, we shall sometimes have wondered why the poor Vicars are left out in the cold. One more instance will suffice, taken this time out of the Occasional Offices. In the Marriage Service, when the parties are properly placed and no impediment has been alleged, '*then shall the Curate say unto the man*, N. Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife ?' &c.

It is plain that Curate is used in the Prayer Book as the general name for the priest who has cure of souls in any parish or chapelry, whether he be Rector, or Vicar, or neither.

We must now explain how the clergyman who had cure of souls in a parish might be neither Rector nor Vicar. It has been said that in all probability every parish was at first a rectory. The Rector might also be styled the Curate, as having the cure of souls. Then when the endowments of some parishes were appropriated, and the priest who took charge of such parishes was called a Vicar, he also would be rightly styled the Curate. But there seems to have been some parishes whose endowments were appropriated where provision was made for a parish priest, not by assigning to him a portion of the original revenues, but from some fresh source. A clergyman who ministered in such a parish was of course not the Rector, neither was he, as it seems, generally styled the Vicar, so that there remained only the title of Curate by which to describe him. But as he was permanently attached to the parish, he came to be known as the Perpetual Curate, and such a living was called a Perpetual Curacy. Again in large parishes churches were often built which did not at first attain to the dignity of parish churches, but were known as chapels of ease, and the district attached to them was known as a chapelry. There were at the time of the Reformation a considerable number of these chapelries in various parts of the country. In the parish of Whalley above mentioned there were six or eight chapelries, and at least an equal number in the adjacent parish of Halifax. The ministers of these chapels of ease were Perpetual Curates, and retained that title long after their churches had become parochial.

Another class of clergymen who were also at first entitled Perpetual Curates are the incumbents of new parishes constituted in our own days. When church building revived at the beginning of the present century, there was no other name to designate the clergy of the new churches than that of Perpetual Curate. The title lasted on until nearly thirty years ago, when it was thought that the style of Vicar would be a more honourable one, and an Act was passed by which clergymen holding Perpetual Curacies have the right to be styled Vicar. They are not Vicars in the true and original meaning of the word, but have the title by courtesy. There may be some who will think with the writer of this paper that

a great mistake was made. The ancient and legitimate title was at hand in the name of Rector : the name of Vicar is in no sense an honourable one, either to the Church or to the nation, and is but a perpetual reminder of injustice and spoliation.

It was stated on a previous page that a few new parishes are titular Rectories. These are principally parishes which have been formed by subdividing an ancient Rectory, and admitted to a share in the revenues of the mother church. The ancient parish of Manchester is a Rectory, the glebe-lands of which, situated in the heart of the city, are now exceedingly valuable ; from it have been cut off a very large number of daughter parishes, each of which has now its share in the rectorial endowments, and each of which is a titular Rectory. All this seems to suggest that it would have been wiser to make every parish which enjoys its own endowments into a Rectory, and to limit the name of Vicarage to those parishes where Church money is diverted from Church purposes.

We proceed now to speak of the modern assistant Curate. It is usually reckoned that there are about 25,000 clergymen in England and Wales. Not all of these, of course, are parish priests, engaged mainly or exclusively in parish work. There must be a considerable number who have retired from active service owing to old age or ill-health, and there are many who are engaged in teaching. There may be deducted about 4,000 who are in Holy Orders but not definitely attached to a parish. There will thus remain about 21,000 clergymen who have cure of souls, either as Curates in the proper sense or as assistant Curates. As the number of parishes in the country is in round numbers 14,000, it will be seen that of every three clergymen who are at work in them, two are Curates in the original and Prayer Book sense (Rectors or Vicars in the usual style), while one is an assistant Curate who helps one of the other two in the execution of his duties. In the agricultural parts of the country where the stated duties are comparatively light and the populations small, a parish with an assistant Curate is the exception ; while on the other hand wherever the parishes are densely populated the number of assistant Curates is very large. In the diocese of London the general proportion of the country is exactly reversed, and there are two assistant Curates for every Rector or Vicar. In the diocese of Rochester, which includes much of South

London, there are more assistant Curates than there are parishes. In some of the northern dioceses the number of unbeneficed clergy is but little less than that of the beneficed.

This condition of things is of quite recent growth, and has been brought about as a result of the remarkable increase of population in the last few generations. With but few exceptions the assistant Curate as we know him had no existence at so recent a period as the last century. The general rule from the time of the Reformation until the year 1838 was to find one clergyman only, resident and ministering in each parish. And as regards such a state of things a hundred or more years ago, we can well understand that it might then be entirely satisfactory, for there were no large parishes in those days—large, that is, not in extent, but in the number of parishioners.

The reason why the year 1838 is specially mentioned is that in that year a change was made in the laws relating to the holding of benefices. Before that time a clergyman had been allowed to hold more livings than one, and some clergymen held three or four, or even in rare cases more still. It would be hard to find any one now who would say much in favour of such a practice. In some cases, indeed, a clergyman may still hold two livings, but they must be close together, and of small population and poor pecuniary value; in fact, it is only permitted where it would be difficult to work the two parishes satisfactorily if they were separated. But in those days a clergyman would hold several livings in different parts of the country, so wide apart as to make it impossible that he could serve them himself. Indeed, this holding of benefices in plurality, as it was called, was merely a way, and a most objectionable one, of increasing the clerical income of the favoured clergyman.

If, therefore, a pluralist resided in one of his parishes and undertook the parochial duty, he had to engage the services of some clergyman to minister to the other whenever it was some distance away. This clergyman, though only employed by the Rector or Vicar to make good his deficiencies, was yet in all strictness the Curate of the parish, because to him the cure of souls was entrusted. The absentee Rector seldom interfered in any Church matters, and it was quite common for the same Curate to have charge of a parish for his lifetime, during which many Rectors had come and gone. The Curate of a parish which had a non-resident Rector was called in

law a 'Stipendiary Curate,' from the stipend or fixed salary paid for his services. People of the present generation who have not read much of the Church History of modern times will find it hard to realise how common it was to find no Rector or Vicar residing in a parish. So lately as 1810, a year in which many people still living were born, out of 9,754 livings, 5,395, or more than half, were served by Stipendiary Curates. And in 1838 there were 4,307 livings where the Rectors or Vicars did not perform the duty.

The important thing to notice is that the Curate was not an assistant Curate, but a Curate in the strict sense, seeing that the Rector or Vicar who should have taken charge of the parish left it entirely in his hands. Since 1838, whenever a pluralist died or resigned, the livings which he held have been filled up separately, and thus the old race of Curates gradually dwindled almost to nothing. Where they exist at the present time people often call them 'Curates in charge,' forgetful that the word Curate in itself means the priest in charge. But while the old race of Curates was decaying, the new race of assistant Curates was being created by a revived zeal for Church work in our populous parishes. As both were composed of the same class of men, clergymen who are not beneficed, it is little wonder that the usual name of the former was commonly transferred to the latter, and that the title of Curate has long been popularly given to assistant clergy and to them alone.

To sum up, however, if we are to use the word in its strict propriety, the Curate of a parish is the clergyman who has charge of that parish. If the Rector or Vicar be resident, he is the Curate; if non-resident, as he may be through ill-health or other sufficient reason, the clergyman who takes his place is the Curate. All other clergymen working in a parish are assistant Curates. And as for a Parson, he is in reality a clerical Rector, as may be seen from that rubric at the end of the English Communion Service, which directs every parishioner to pay at Easter the customary dues to the 'Parson, Vicar, or Curate.'

SOME FORGOTTEN BOOKS.

II.—THE ‘PRISON THOUGHTS’ OF DR. DODD.

THE celebrated case of Dr. Dodd crops up pretty frequently in the literature of his day. Probably no single trial (unless we except the world-renowned Dreyfus case) excited more widespread interest and sympathy in its own time. Boswell’s ‘Life of Dr. Johnson’ contains several references to the unfortunate doctor, on whose behalf Johnson himself composed more than one petition, besides writing the greater part of his sermon to his fellow-prisoners at Newgate. The matter has grown rather dim to us now; but even in these days most readers have a hazy recollection of the name, and of the man’s fate. Few, I imagine, have read even this—the best known of his many writings—unless, like myself, they chance to possess a copy and have had their curiosity awakened by seeing it mentioned elsewhere. Yet it is worth reading, if not as mere poetry, at any rate as a human document. The poem is not a long one: in my edition (Cooke’s duodecimo) it occupies only eighty-nine small pages; and the remainder of the volume is eked out with a few other verses, his speeches at the trial, and the petitions put forward for a reprieve. It is artificial, but probably less artificial than most of the poetry of that age, when elegance and the classic touch were rated, perhaps, at something above their true value. It was the common opinion among his contemporaries that our author had done wonderfully well, considering the unfortunate position he occupied. Personally I am inclined to think that it was precisely this unfortunate position that gave his verses that touch of real feeling which raised them above the level of a mere academic exercise. Here was a man, a decent scholar, with a turn for polite letters. In ordinary circumstances he would never have done more than write tolerable verse. His sentence made him, at any rate, see things as they were: he was set face to face with a matter of real importance, and this gave to his ‘Thoughts in Prison’ a

certain value above that of his other works. Love, it has often been said, has made poets enough : Dr. Dodd is probably the unique instance of a poet who was made by fear.

The early life of William Dodd was little more creditable than its inglorious end. He was something of a wild youth, it must be admitted, but in all probability his worst faults were impulsiveness and extravagance. He began his career of authorship early, while he was still an undergraduate. It was Clare Hall, Cambridge, that had the doubtful honour of his education :—

‘And so my college taught, delightful Clare,’

he sings in this poem. Versification, of the facetious and mock-heroic order, was his first fancy ; but this did not prevent him from taking a good degree. In the Cambridge Calendar can still be seen the name Dodd, of Clare, fifteenth in the list of the Mathematical Tripos for 1749–50. Like most young authors, he gravitated to London—and promptly married, on a very insufficient income. It seems to have been his fashion to take the most momentous steps in haste, repenting subsequently at leisure. His wife was of no very distinguished birth—she was the daughter of a verger at Durham—and she was instrumental afterwards in bringing her husband into considerable disgrace, but the match seems to have been a happy one. The references to her in the poem are numerous :—

‘Nor thou, Maria, with me ! Oh, my wife,
And in this bitter with the bitterest mix’d,
That I must lose thy heavenly company,
And consolation soothing ! Yet, ’tis best :
Thy tenderness, thy presence, doth but wound
And stab to the keenest quick my bursting heart.’

The passage is not particularly remarkable as poetry, but it may be quoted as evidence of a certain amount of conjugal affection.

Authorship alone was soon found insufficient for his growing needs. Dodd published an elegy, on the death of Frederick Prince of Wales, and wrote a comedy. A novel is also attributed to his pen, entitled, “The Sisters, or the History of Lucy and Caroline Sanson, entrusted to a false Friend.” It does not appear to have been a work of conspicuous morality. It was in 1751 that his friends persuaded him to become ordained, and from thenceforward his rise was rapid. He was a popular

preacher, and preferment came rapidly. In twelve years he had attained his zenith, being appointed chaplain to the king and to the Bishop of St. David's, who gave him a prebendary at Brecon, and also obtained for him the tutorship of Philip Stanhope, afterwards Earl of Chesterfield. In 1766 he received the degree of LL.D. But in spite of his popularity, and the possession of several good livings, his ambition and extravagance caused him to be perennially in want of money. He invested £2,500 belonging to his wife—the proceeds of a legacy and a prize in a lottery—in building a private chapel, known afterwards as the Charlotte Chapel, in Pimlico, but the profits from this source did not come up to his expectations, popular preacher though he was. Then Mrs. Dodd wrote anonymously to Lady Apsley, wife of the Lord Chancellor, offering a bribe if she would secure his appointment to the living of St. George's, Hanover Square. The letter was traced to her, and the exposure that followed damaged Dodd's reputation beyond repair. He was promptly struck off the list of royal chaplains: the public press deluged him with satire and abuse; and, worst of all, Foote introduced his wife into his farce, 'The Cozeners,' under the name of Mrs. Simony. At the end of the third week in his 'Thoughts,' the doctor attempted to repay the 'coward mimic' with interest.

Driven abroad by this affair, he soon fell into serious difficulties. As the chronicler of his life prefixed to my edition rather quaintly puts it, "his extravagance continued undiminished, and drove him to schemes which overwhelmed him with additional infamy. He descended so low as to become the editor of a newspaper." But even this heroic effort failed to retrieve his fortunes. He returned to London, and to his preaching, for awhile. On February 2, 1777, he preached, for the last time as a free man, in the Magdalen House, an institution in which he had always taken great interest, and at which he had preached the inaugural sermon. Two days later he committed the forgery which led to his execution. This is the account of his case, as given in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of the next month:—

'Rev. Dr. Dodd and Mr. Robinson, a broker, were charged before the Lord-Mayor, by Henry Fletcher, and Samuel Peach, Esqrs., with forging and uttering, as true, a counterfeit bond, purporting to be the bond of the Earl of Chesterfield, to whom the Doctor is chaplain, for the payment of £4,200 with an intent to defraud, &c.'

The prosecutors were, apparently, the two gentlemen who lent the money on the bond. Dodd immediately restored £3,500 of the amount, and gave a bill for the remainder ; and for a time it seemed as if the scandal might have been hushed up, but the mayor insisted on going into the case, and he was formally committed for trial. The first week of his 'Thoughts in Prison' is dated as 'commenced Sunday evening, eight o'clock, Feb. 23, 1777' ; the fifth, and last, week concludes abruptly, and bears no date ; but it was not until the 27th of June that the execution took place. Up to the last, Dodd seems to have been persuaded that his life would be spared. Rumours circulated after his execution of a private arrangement with the hangman, and extensive preparations 'according to the method of Dr. Hunter' to revive the body ; but it was said that the immense crowd of sightseers, by delaying the hearse, destroyed any chance of success in the experiment. Nevertheless, there was for long afterwards a superstition among some that he had escaped. In Germany, for some curious reason, many believed that he wandered, in disguise, among the Hartz mountains, for years after his supposed execution.

It is curious to read contemporary opinion upon the publication of Dodd's poem. Boswell, as usual, was anxious to discover his hero's opinion upon the momentous question in good time. His own was the common thought—that 'it was an extraordinary effort by a man who was in Newgate for a capital crime.' Johnson was not enthusiastic. He had met Dodd once, in the days of his prosperity, and he had been induced to make certain efforts in the direction of procuring a reprieve, but it is plain that he exerted himself rather for the sake of the Doctor's cloth than from any motives of personal affection. I fancy Johnson found it difficult to persuade himself of the convict's absolute sincerity. It annoyed him not a little that Dodd should have left the world under the impression that the 'Address to his Fellow-prisoners' was the work of his own hand ; and he could not readily believe that the intercession for the king's welfare in his 'Last Prayer' was not a piece of cant. For all that, he wrote him a kindly and very sensible letter, the day before his execution. Of the 'Thoughts in Prison' he was content to allow that they were 'pretty well, if you were previously disposed to like them.'

The *Gentleman's Magazine*, in its review of the poem, holds

that 'without strong but delusive hopes of pardon, rashly suggested by his too sanguine friends, his mind could never have been sufficiently at ease for such a composition.' Compare with this an *obiter dictum* of Johnson's : 'Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is going to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates the mind wonderfully.' I take it that it was precisely the violent alternation of hope and fear, the excess of emotion, that inspired Dodd to write this, his most successful work. He had many inducements to undertake the task—the temperament of a preacher, opportunity for reflection, the natural desire to leave some slight monument to posterity. The famous 'Night Thoughts' of Dr. Young were before him as a model : it was an age of moralising ; and he could not but feel that his own fate furnished an example that was worthy of some little adornment. The poem is not unduly polished : it was completed in little more than two months ; and, certainly, it has all the appearance of having been written from the heart. The verse is rhetorical, no doubt—at that time verse could not well be otherwise—but there is a real note of suffering in it that redeems it from more than a suspicion of cant. A mind of absolute simplicity would have preferred prose—or silence. If Dodd chose verse, he made his verse at least simpler than he would have made it had he been a free man.

Here is the introductory note prefixed by the author to his original manuscript :—

'April 23, 1777.

'I began these Thoughts merely from the impression of my mind, without plan, purpose, or motive, more than the situation and state of my soul. I continued them on a thoughtful and regular plan ; and I have been enabled wonderfully—in a state, which in better days I should have supposed would have destroyed all power of reflection—to bring them nearly to a conclusion. I dedicate them to God, and the *reflecting Serious* among my fellow-creatures ; and bless the Almighty to go through them amidst the terrors of this dire place, and the anguish of my disconsolate mind !

'The Thinking will easily pardon all inaccuracies, as I am neither *able* nor *willing* to read over these melancholy lines with a *serious* and *critical* eye ! They are imperfect, but the language of the heart ; and, had I time and inclination, might and should be improved.

'But—

'W. D.'

The poem might be described as a series of five sermons in blank verse : The Imprisonment—The Retrospect—Public Punishment—The Trial—Futurity—these are the headings of the several divisions. On the whole, the series is singularly

free from any complaints as to the injustice of his punishment. He had offended against the law, knowing the punishment it awarded, and he does not seek to palliate his offence. But the condition of the prisons and the state of the penal law called loudly for reform, and it would have been strange indeed had he failed to touch upon either subject. Mr. Hanway had recently published his pamphlet on 'Solitude in Imprisonment,' and in his third section—on Public Punishment—Dodd takes occasion to mention it with warm praise :—

'Hail, gracious Hanway ! To thy noble plan,
Sage sympathetic, let the muse subscribe,
Rejoicing——'

To the educated prisoner, at all events, nothing was less desirable than compulsory association with his fellow-convicts. Later on, he details the advantages of solitude at greater length :—

'Thy blest effects
Already on my mind's delighted eye
Open beneficent. E'en now I view
The revel-rout dispersed ; each to his cell
Admitted, silent ! The obstreperous cries
Worse than infernal yells ; the clank of chains—
Opprobrious chains, to man severe disgrace,
Hushed in calm order, vex the ears no more !
While in their stead, reflection's deep-drawn sighs,
And prayers of humble penitence are heard.'

The silent system may have had its drawbacks, but it was decidedly an improvement upon the pandemonium of old Newgate.

Against the Draconian severity of the penal code then in force he had, at least, an equally strong case. Says the account published by the Ordinary of Newgate : 'He had sometimes expressed his thoughts about our penal laws, that they were too sanguinary—that they were against not only the laws of God, but of nature ;' and the same very just sentiment is expressed with sufficient eloquence in 'Week the Fourth—The Trial' :—

'Hoary grown
And sanctify'd by custom's habit grey,
Absurdity stalks forth, still more absurd,
And double shame reflects upon an age
Wise and enlighten'd. Should not equal laws
Their punishments proportionate to crimes ;
Nor, all Draconic, ev'n to blood pursue
Vindictive, where the venial poor offence
Cries loud for mercy ?'

This, with the other passages I have cited, is rather sound sense than inspired poetry. It is probable that the verdict of most, on reading through the entire book, would be that of Johnson, quoted above. The 'Thoughts in Prison' is fairly good didactic verse, rising here and there, though not often, into passages of real eloquence that approach poetry very nearly. It may not soar so high, but it descends no lower, than the better known poem of Young: there is more flat prose, but less inflated rhodomontade in Dodd than in the author of 'Night Thoughts.' There is a certain similarity in the characters of the two men. With less extravagance, Young had perhaps an even greater thirst for money and the sunshine of noble patrons. Both men wrote with a strong feeling for religion, but in the midst of all Young's piety there breathes a spirit of querulous discontent which does not show well beside the deep melancholy of the 'Thoughts in Prison.' Dodd, at least, had some cause for sadness. But it is true that, from a literary standpoint, he had the better material to work upon. What the author of 'Night Thoughts' might have accomplished had he lain some months in Newgate, a condemned felon, must always remain a matter of conjecture. I suspect, though, that not every mind would produce its best work under so powerful a tonic. It is something to the credit of Dodd's intellect that it came through so terrible an ordeal with such a result.

E. H. LACON WATSON.

BEETLES.

BEETLE is a term which covers no small section of the insect world. Members of very many different species, and even genera, are all known popularly by the convenient name of beetle. One of the insects to which the name is given, the common and most objectionable cockroach, the pest of kitchens and sculleries, is not a beetle at all; yet 'black-beetle' he will continue to be to innumerable disgusted householders. Beetles of one kind or another are found in most parts of the world. The most celebrated is the sacred scarabæus of the ancient Egyptians, the insect which, being supposed to be only of the male sex, was regarded as typical of self-begotten, self-created existence, the representative of the paternal principle of nature. In hieroglyphical inscriptions the figured beetle represented the verb to be, to exist. The sacred insect was worshipped in life, and after death embalmed. Carven scarabs were used in endless ways for ornament as well as for mystic religious purposes. They were worn as amulets, and were placed on the bodies of the dead—probably with significant reference to their resurrection. They were also used as seals, and set in rings, necklaces, and other articles of personal adornment. These ancient scarabs, which were carved in stone, steatite, carnelian, porcelain, lapis-lazuli, basalt, and other lasting materials, were usually inscribed—sometimes with names and titles, sometimes with mottoes or devices, or extracts from the sacred Egyptian Book of the Dead. An abundance of examples can be seen in the galleries of the British Museum.

Traces of very special regard for the beetle have been found in more northern countries. The learned Grimm has shown how remains of the sacred character which once attached to the insect can be found in the various names that have been given by Teutonic and Scandinavian peoples to the beetle. Our large stag-beetle is in some parts of Germany called the thunder-beetle, perhaps because oak-trees are among its

favourite haunts, and the oak is sacred to thunder. Other names for this great beetle indicate a supposed connection with thunder and lightning. The Germans have a saying that on its horns it carries red-hot coals into a roof and sets it alight ; and there is a belief that lightning will strike a house into which it is carried. In this country most kinds of beetles, far from being regarded with reverence, are looked upon as a rule with abhorrence. Exception may be made in favour of the harmless cockchafer—chafer or chaffer is a very old English name for beetles in general—and of that friend of children, the innocent lady-bird, whom the little ones salute with the chant of—

‘Ladybird, ladybird, fly away home,
Thy house is on fire, thy children will burn.’

The cockchafer is also a link with the ancient sacredness of the beetle. The first cockchafer was regarded in Germany of old as one of the sacred harbingers of spring, and was brought in from the woods with much ceremony and symbolism. German children still have a custom, when cockchafers first appear, of tying one by a thread to their left hand, and then chanting to the captive a verse which has much puzzled wise students of these matters. One learned investigator has made a collection of these verses, which vary in different districts, and has come to the conclusion that they refer to the fearful catastrophe which attends the close of the war between the gods and the giants of the ancient northern mythology. This seems a tremendous theme for a boy’s chant to a cockchafer ; but strange things are found in the realm of folk-lore. The usual burden of the chanted lines is, ‘May chafer must fly away home, his father is at the wars, his mother is in Pomerania, Pomerania is all burnt’—or something very similar. Our lady-bird children’s rhyme, quoted above, is evidently a near relation of the German cockchafer chant. It is sometimes varied to—

‘Ladybird, ladybird, hie thy way home !
Thy house is on fire ! thy children all roam !’

The lady-bird, indeed, is one of the most widely revered of beetles. In many languages it has names suggestive of its once sacred character. The Hindus call it the ‘Preserver,’ Russians the ‘Little cow of God,’ Germans the ‘Lady-cow.’

In some parts of Italy it is sacred to St. Michael ; in others to St. Lucia. Mr. Karl Blind says that the children who are said by the English rhyme to be in danger of burning are, 'The unborn who dwell in the fragrant domain of the Goddess of Love, on flowery meadows, and in the foliage of her garden, until the little lady-bird, the messenger of our Lady Freia-Holda, comes to call them into human existence.'

Insects called gold-beetles, which are sacred guardians of treasure, figure in some old folk-stories. One ancient German legend narrates how some young girls, visiting a deserted tower on a hill one Sunday afternoon, found the stairs strewn with sand. They went up, and in a beautiful room which they had never seen before they found a curtained bed. Drawing the curtain aside they were astonished to find the bed swarming with gold-beetles. Amazement soon gave place to horror, and the children fled from the room and down the stairs pursued by an unearthly howl and racket. Another legend tells how a little girl on a castled hill saw a new copper pot standing on three legs, swarming full of horse-beetles. She told her parents, who, keen for treasure, at once hurried to the hill ; but pot and beetles had disappeared. In a Magyar folk-tale—Hungary is particularly rich in this kind of literature—two beetles play leading parts. One is black, and is the keeper of a witch's power ; the other is shining, and is the guardian of her life. All these legends and allusions attest the once sacred character of the insect ; and even in apparently more trivial customs and practices traces of beetle-worship can be found. Swedish girls in spring, for instance, place a certain kind of small beetle on their hand, and if it fly away they take note of the direction, for thence will come the bridegroom. The same insect is attached to the goddess of agriculture as well as of love, for if there are more than seven black spots on its wings there will be scarcity of corn, while less than seven betoken an abundant harvest.

A very common name for any kind of beetle in English country districts, especially in the northern counties, is 'clock.' The origin of the name is quite unknown. But it may perhaps be connected with the following curious piece of legendary superstition. In Ireland a certain kind of beetle is called a 'cocktail,' or the 'devil's coach-horse' ; and as the peasant sets his foot on the creature, he says, 'Sure it told Judas the time.' In the far north of Scotland, in Sutherlandshire, beetles are

equally detested, and popular dislike of them is accounted for by another legend, more picturesque and more circumstantial. Briefly stated, it is as follows : In the course of their flight into Egypt the Holy Family passed through a field where men were sowing corn. The Virgin spoke to the men and besought them, if any one should ask for news of the fugitives, to say that a man, a woman, and a child had indeed passed that way, but only when they were sowing their crop. The men promised, and forthwith the corn shot up, and stood fully ripe. The labourers began to reap; and while they were thus engaged some of Herod's soldiers appeared and asked the expected question. The men gave the promised answer, and the soldiers were about to turn back, discouraged, when a black beetle lifted up its voice and said, 'Yesterday, only yesterday, the Son of God passed this way.' Hence the Highland detestation of the beetle. Boys, when they find one, will stamp on it and say, 'Beetle ! beetle ! you won't see to-morrow !' Dead beetles tell no tales.

G. L. APPERSON.

THE STRONG GOD CIRCUMSTANCE.

BY HELEN SHIPTON, AUTHOR OF 'THE HERONS,' 'DAGMAR,' ETC.

BOOK II.

'OF THE WILL OF THE PRINCESS.'

CHAPTER XXI.

ON CROSS RIGG.

"In the early, early morning the summer sun 'ill shine.
Before the red cock crows from the farm upon the hill,
When you are warm-asleep, and all the world is still."

Tennyson.

It was still high summer, though August was over, when Vanessa awoke, in the dawn of a brilliant morning, with the ease and completeness of one used to take a long ride before the tropical sun had well risen.

The weather had been unsettled, after the fashion of the beginning of September, and the night before she had gone to sleep, after a grey, pouring day, with the rain still sobbing at her window. And now there was not a cloud in the sky, and the world might have been all new-made; and Vanessa, looking up at the gem-besprinkled jasmine and roses, suddenly felt the courage to take her fate into her own hands and make her own world anew.

There was more than one reason why this should seem to be the time to act, why the admirable qualities of maiden-modesty and reserve should cease to be the first and chief consideration.

In the first place, Sir Francis, whose return had more than once been put off, was now definitely expected in a day or two; and Vanessa was perhaps excusably determined to settle her lot for herself before he should arrive. What she had resolved upon was in nowise wrong; the man she had chosen was a highminded Christian gentleman, who but for the one

thing might have been regarded as an ideal husband for Sir Francis's daughter—and whether it was for her happiness or not was a matter upon which she felt that she herself must decide. But it would be easier and pleasanter to reconcile him to what she *had* done than to persuade him to consent to her doing it, and Vanessa was accustomed to please her father as well as to have her own way.

There was another and more potent reason, too. The day before, 'Waterlow v. Vaughan' had been heard by the bench, and Redmond had had to appear before a row of his father's old friends, to be kindly but severely reprimanded by the oldest of them, and finally to be bound over to keep the peace for one year, with a hint that but for consideration shown to his ignorance and inexperience, he would not have escaped a heavier penalty.

All the long, wet day, while the rain dripped from the heavy-headed roses and the broad leaves of the sycamores behind the house, Vanessa had wandered restlessly up and down, picturing to herself all that Redmond must be enduring, and wishing herself by his side, if only her presence could have been his shield from obnoxious scorn and still more obnoxious pity. It would have been small comfort to her if she could have known that old Mr. Carstairs was remarking to his son-in-law that 'from his soul he was glad that things were no worse with his old friend Vaughan's son! The young fellow was a fine-grown, upstanding young fellow, and, in spite of this escapade, he didn't seem to be altogether a fool, but spoke sensibly enough, and no doubt would be wiser in future.'

No one at Lassington had seen Redmond since he came back from what must to him have been such a painful ordeal—to say nothing of the stunning effect of such an absolutely new experience. Arthur Kenyon, who had insisted on bearing him company, had sought out the ladies to tell them that he had gone through it all very quietly and with a good deal of dignity, and seemed to have been too much taken up with the serious aspects of the case to have felt much personal shyness or annoyance.

'Painful as all this has been, it has broken the spell,' said Arthur, looking significantly at Vanessa. 'I quite think that after this he might be persuaded to come out a little more into the world, if any one knew how to set about it. I could see that some of the gentlemen present were correcting their

previous ideas of him, that they would be glad to make his acquaintance if he would allow them.'

Arthur would have stayed to discuss the matter in all its bearings, but he was looking very white and weary after this, his first expedition beyond the boundary of the garden; and Winifred, as his late nurse, ordered him off to bed, reminding him that he had to get strong for his journey home, which was fixed—rather in opposition to the doctor—for the next day. And at the mention of Kenyon Court Arthur's face darkened suddenly and his quick tongue for once was silent. Very shortly he wished them good-night and went away, and Vanessa took his hint to her pillow with her.

Hope and fear—courage and doubt—all combined to make her restless the next morning, and finishing her dressing in haste she stole out through the still silent house into the fresh, morning air. To her Anglo-Indian ideas it seemed a very natural thing to take a walk so early, and if she should meet Redmond, who probably had not yet come in again, so much the better. Only once before had they met in the dewy freshness of the morning, and then he had told her of his love and its despair. Now it was very fitting that in this same fresh, hopeful hour he should learn that as he loved, so he was loved, dearly and truly.

In the garden she paused, wondering whether to turn north, south, east, or west; and then a little sound from the stable-yard gave her an idea, and made her smile a little to herself. Unlocking the door in the ivy-covered wall that divided the garden from the yard, she whistled softly and waited an instant, and the next moment a little grey dog ran up to her, delighted at meeting with human companionship at this unusual hour.

'Ah! Snip,' she said, 'we will have a walk, my dog; and if you can you shall take me to your master.'

Snip, who since he had lost the master of his doggish faithful heart had accepted Redmond as his successor, was evidently looking about for somebody; and as Vanessa led him round to the side-door by which Redmond always set forth upon his nightly rambles, the little dog went nosing round for a moment, then obviously picked up a trail, and trotted demurely along, every now and then glancing round to see whether Vanessa was following him.

And Vanessa, considering that she might as well follow

Snip's guidance as any other, walked quickly along beneath the pine-trees, while the road degenerated into a cart-track, and the cart-track into a footpath, and still she and her little guide went on and up, keeping within the line of wood that clothed one side of the valley almost all the way from Lassington to where the vale closed in and ended in the moorland.

She was thinking too deeply to be very well aware of how far or how fast she was walking, till presently the footpath came out into another cart-track—not now among trees, but with rough stone walls and small rushy fields on either side. Here the upward slope was so steep that she must perforce slacken her pace, and so became aware that the sun was already hot, and that she was growing tired, and that it might be well to think of returning.

'Snip !' she said rather sadly, 'I am afraid you are a blind guide !—or perhaps, poor boy, you are looking for the master that you will never find again. But I suppose this track leads to some farm, and so into the road ; and it seems to me that the road may prove a quicker and easier way back to Lassington than these woodland paths of yours.'

Snip wagged his stump of a tail, and pursued his way steadily, with one glance out of his single eye that seemed to deprecate hasty judgments ; and Vanessa, following, found that her guess had been wrong in one respect, for the cart-track led to no farm-house, but in an unexpected fashion out into the bare, white road that led across the moor.

Not far away another bare white road struck into it also, and just at the junction was an oddly shaped shaft of stone, like a churchyard cross from which the arms had been broken. And on the step at its foot sat a figure, with folded arms and downbent head, at the sight of which Vanessa's heart gave a leap, while her feet began to waver and hesitate as if now her only desire was to pass by unseen.

She scorned herself for her hesitation, even while Snip ran up and fawned upon his new master's knees.

Redmond looked up and started to his feet.

'You here ?' he said. 'So far from home, and so early for you to be out ! Did you lose your way ?'

'Yes, and No,' she answered. 'I took Snip for my guide and he brought me to you. I wanted to meet you, and it did not much matter where.'

'Rest a little while at any rate before we go back,' said Redmond, drawing her to his seat beneath the stone shaft ; and as she obeyed him silently he threw himself on the dusty grass at her feet, and Snip lay contentedly down beside him.

His eyes dwelt hungrily upon every line of her face beneath the shade of her hat, noting every quiver of the lip or finely cut nostril, every flicker of the eyelashes ; but his first words were not about anything immediately connected with either of them.

'Do you know what this is ?' he asked, laying his hand against the grey stone, sun-warmed already.

'No. I was never here before, and you never told me about it, I think.'

'Did I not ? I thought I had told you everything. Here a forefather of mine killed a man, in the rough old days that most of us have forgotten. There was a fight—some village feud or other—between the two hamlets of Ashden and Lassington. My ancestor was not their leader—we did not own Lassington then—only he happened to strike the one blow that had fatal consequence that day. I cannot find out whether he was ordered by the priests to raise this cross by way of expiation, or whether he did it of his own free will, to mark the spot and to commemorate his victim. Here the cross stands, however, and still gives its name to the Ridge, though some detachment of Puritan soldiers, marching by, was zealous enough to knock off its arms. And you can still read, here on its base, the prayer that my forefather had graven there. I was thinking as you came up that my lot was not unlike his, and that the prayer might be meant for me too.'

'What is it ?'

Redmond lifted his hand, and touched the worn, blurred letters with a reverent finger.

'*On hym who rayseed thys Crosse, & on alle synfulle soules, Blessed Lorde, have Thou mercy,*' he read.

And Vanessa answered softly, '*Amen.*'

There was a pause, and then she smiled a little wistful smile.

'But I daresay your ancestor thought very little more about the matter after he had built his cross. Probably it was very clear to him that it was the fortune of war, and might have

happened to himself just as well as to another. Although he was far more directly instrumental than you, it is not likely that he troubled himself half so much.'

'Perhaps not,' said Redmond, with a smile that was the shadow of hers. 'We have no business to revive the methods of our forefathers, for we are too fine-spun to stand their results.'

He looked still many years older than he had done at the beginning of the summer; the past few weeks had left traces that nothing would ever wear away. Even his voice had gained a different quality—that indescribable ring that tells of endurance and patience.

The sadness of his look gave Vanessa courage.

'Do you remember?' she said, 'what we were talking of—the day after——? Of giving and taking—and how to take is the harder part, and so perhaps the nobler?'

'There are not many words that you have ever said to me that I do not remember, and shall not always remember,' he answered steadily; but he said no more, and Vanessa was silent for a moment, looking straight before her.

'Redmond!' she said at last. 'If you knew what I meant then—if you guess what I mean now—some people would think that you might help me a little! But I do not think I mind much whether you help me or not. I have no proper pride left, and no maidenly shame. You told me once that you loved me, but that you could not live my life, nor I yours. I did not contradict you then, because I was not sure. I knew that I loved you, but I was not sure what love meant. *Now I know!* I know that I can live your life, and that no other could make me happy. Hush! let me finish my say before you speak. Redmond—it all comes to this—since I love you enough to give myself to you, do you love me enough to take me?'

Frankly she held out her hand, and his took and held it fast; but as if with a tremendous effort he dragged away the glowing eyes that were bent upon her face.

"Enough—and too much——" he answered passionately, but she broke in upon his words with an even more imperious passion.

'No! there is no question of too much between us two. Love me enough to see from my point of view, to let me judge for myself, and be happy in my own way. Love me enough

to forget what other people may think or say—what you yourself thought once—enough to feel that when two are one there can be no reckoning as to who gives or who takes most. Love me better than *your* pride, as I love you better than mine. Or else—let me go, and never think again that you know what love is !’

Almost unconsciously Vanessa had started to her feet as she spoke, and as she ended she turned away with that instinct of flight that comes to a woman who has spoken out her very inmost soul and is more than half afraid of herself.

But somehow Redmond was before her, and if his look and gesture told of reverent and amazed delight they told also that he had accepted her challenge—that she was her own no longer.

It is possible that Redmond, and perhaps Vanessa too, would not have been sorry if Arthur Kenyon would have helped them to face Sir Francis when he should arrive.

And under other circumstances Arthur, having foreseen what was coming, might have been willing to do so, and would have had little doubt that he could make out a far better case for his friend than Redmond would do for himself.

But as things were he did not feel that he could bring himself to explain his own position, nor would he have any dealings with Sir Francis while the latter was in ignorance of it. Moreover, it was clearly Arthur’s duty to go and see his brother as soon as he was at all able to do so. Sir Robert had written again, regretting that his ignorance of the accident had caused him to make his proposal at such an unfortunate moment, and begging that Arthur would postpone the consideration of it until he was quite equal to the exertion, but saying very little about his own health, and otherwise leaving the matter just where his first letter had left it.

And even now, when Arthur was able to consider the question more fully, he could see no way out of it but that on which he had first resolved. Dispassionately he could not well consider it, for Robert’s suggestion seemed to have brought back the first keenness of the perception of his disgrace, and every recollection of it made him hot with wrath or cold with shame. In some vague fashion he was aware that in the case of another he should have advised differently. Any old friend of the family might, he knew, have advised Robert

that the thing was not so black as it had looked at first ; that in a few years' time no one would remember it against Sir Arthur Kenyon, the owner of a considerable property and a power in the county. But it was not for *him* to say so.

'If Robert had bidden me keep up the old place and the old name,' he thought, 'I should have felt it a hard task to lay upon me, but I suppose I should have done it. As it is, I have no heart for the fight. If he would rather that we came to an end—why, let it be so. Who am I, that I should complain ? It is only to consent to be buried, and I knew before that I was dead !'

The doctor had ruled that if Arthur would insist upon traveling he was at any rate not to do so in the heat of the day, but to start late in the afternoon, so as to accomplish most of his journey in the evening ; and also that Redmond's man, Allen, should see him to the very door of Kenyon Court.

It was perhaps not to be wondered at that when Redmond and Vanessa at last arrived at Lassington on that summer morning, by winding woodland paths that, as far as they knew, might have led through the glades of Eden, they should at first have had few thoughts to spare for any one but each other. Vanessa, too, had her little triumph to achieve, to make the young man sit down to breakfast with herself and Winifred—and she achieved it, Redmond being too deep in a maze of wonder and happiness to realise that he had never breakfasted with them before. But when the two girls had vanished together, to give and receive those confidences that were at once so unnecessary and so delightful, Redmond went away to his own rooms and sat down to think, if possible, calmly. He began to construct an imaginary Sir Francis Carroll, out of that gentleman's letters and his own childish recollections, and to wonder how he should defend Vanessa's angelic goodness and his own amazing presumption.

Redmond had perhaps more reason than most men to dread what is generally supposed to be a bad, or at least a nervous quarter of an hour, but still he was a Vaughan of Lassington, and the ample means that his father had left to him had increased rather than diminished in his hands. Vanessa had given herself to him, and what could poor Sir Francis do, let him be never so unwilling to ratify the gift ? Only Redmond wished that the sight of a man of his own rank had not been

quite such a novelty to him. And the thought naturally called Arthur Kenyon to his mind, and made him wish for his friend's sympathy and countenance; and then he remembered that Arthur was going away that afternoon, and further recalled, with a little self-reproach, that it was already nearly noon and that he had not yet seen his guest or even inquired after him that day.

He had just risen to leave his room to do so, when his man, Allen, appeared, with a more than usually discreet and purposeful expression upon his discreet and preoccupied face.

'I beg your pardon, sir,' he began, 'and Mr. Kenyon's too, if I am presuming. But I think it would be well if you went to him.'

'Why? Is he ill? Did he ask for me?' said Redmond, pausing in his hurried movement towards the door.

'No, sir, Mr. Kenyon said nothing to me. But I've just shown out a gentleman that's been with him for a quarter of an hour; and judging by what I couldn't help seeing I should say that Mr. Kenyon had been a good deal agitated, and some one ought to be with him. I didn't like to seem to take any notice, but I thought if you were to go in, sir, as it might be accidentally——'

'Quite right, Allen, I was going in any case to ask after Mr. Kenyon. Just stay within hearing in case anything is wanted.'

The next moment Redmond was in Arthur's room, where the sunblinds were drawn low outside the window and a soft twilight reigned, especially in the corner into which the couch had been pushed on which Arthur was lying. Redmond had not waited for an answer to his inquiry as to whether he might come in, and now he closed the door carefully behind him and came straight to the side of the couch.

'Kenyon!—what is it? Is it bad news?—your brother? Don't!—for God's sake, don't! You will do yourself harm!'

'Harm!—no!' gasped Arthur. 'It has got to come—somehow! . . . I would not—break down—before *him*! . . . I could have laughed—but I should have gone into hysterics—like a schoolgirl. . . . Vaughan! help me to remember that it comes too late—in a way—that my life is broken in two, and nothing can ever mend the flaw in it . . . or I shall go crazy!'

He did not look round, having as it seemed just self-control enough left to be boyishly ashamed of the tempest of emotion

that had mastered him. But his hand closed on Redmond's with a burning, throbbing clasp that warned his friend that however important it might be to understand what had happened, there was something else more important still.

'Wait a bit !' said Redmond, and his deep, full voice had in itself a calming and steadying power. 'Take breath—take time ! Whatever it is that you ought to remember, it seems to me that you are remembering it. You have been, you *are*, so plucky—you won't be beaten now, whatever is the matter.'

'It is all right,' answered Arthur, after a moment, between long, quivering breaths. 'It is only—were you ever nearly drowned, Vaughan ? I was—once ! The drowning wasn't so bad, but the coming to life again . . . ! This is like that. . . It's life, but you can't distinguish it at first from pain. . . In another minute or two I shall *know* that I am alive.'

He lay still, evidently quieting himself by a great effort of will ; and after a moment or two Redmond rose and brought him a glass of water. His hand shook so that he could hardly hold the glass, but that too he mastered presently, and as Redmond took it again Arthur for the first time faced his anxious, inquiring look.

'I'm very sorry,' he said in a much more ordinary tone ; 'I had no idea I should have taken it so badly. It's good news, you see, and I have not been used to that lately.'

'Good news ?' said Redmond. 'I am only too glad to hear it. But being good news it will keep. Don't hurry to tell me until you feel fit to speak. I am curious and anxious enough, but I can wait.'

'I can't,' answered Arthur. 'It will make it seem real, perhaps, if I tell it to you. . . . We have never talked about the circumstances of my ruin, but I know you read all about them, as I asked you to do. Do you remember the name of the elder of the two fellows who stirred up the whole affair ?'

'Theodore Waterlow. Yes, I remember. I looked it up again when the cousin first came down here.'

'Well, I always knew that it was his doing—the other was only his tool, and an unconscious one. He told me once what he had done, and why he had done it ; acted tempter, too, with a sort of diabolical ingenuity, and brought me nearer to yielding than I shall ever like to remember. . . . I had always hated him, even when I, as a great man, was ashamed of hating a mere insignificant undergraduate ; and then I knew

why. He is possessed of a devil—not *the* Devil, you know, but a little, sneering, cold-blooded fiend. . . . I shall always hate him; not because of the wrong he did me, which he has now done his best to undo, but because I so nearly sold my soul to that mean devil of his.'

'My dear fellow, I am afraid you are talking yourself into a fever,' said Redmond quietly. 'I am quite sure you would never have been allowed to sell yourself to any fiend, of higher or lower degree. But what has the possessed one just been doing?'

'Why, there! if he were like other people, one would say that he had repented; but I suppose one could not insult him more than by using such a commonplace in his case. Anyway, he has just been with me, and has brought a written statement which he offers to read over and sign before any witnesses I think proper to appoint. He takes back the charge, and puts me right, as far as one man's word can put right what that same word put wrong. . . . The vault is open—I can come back to life again when I choose! . . . I shall begin to be glad presently. Just now I could only feel that I hated him—hated him for the harm that he knew of, and for the worse harm that he would never have been capable of understanding—and that I would die rather than let him see that I cared so very much for what he had had it in his power to take away, and now was condescending to give back.'

'Natural, but foolish; and you are all the worse for it at this moment. But tell me, what makes Waterlow willing now to confess?'

'Heaven knows! Possibly his devil has gone out of him. His account of the matter is that he is tired of Europe and of civilisation, that he is going to settle in some remote South Sea island, and—as I gathered—to "wed some savage woman," and so forth. That being the case, it is a matter of absolute indifference to him whether the wise heads of England think that I or he behaved disgracefully rather more than a year ago! . . . Have patience with me, Vaughan! I know I am putting all this in the most odious light—sinning against my own consciousness of this unspeakable, unlooked-for deliverance. But I shall never take the thing properly until I can get Waterlow out of the foreground. His worthy uncle remarked that that young man "turned his stomach," and the expression is equally forcible and correct.'

'I think that you are terribly over-excited, and I wish I knew which was most likely to do you harm—to talk, or not to talk, about this business !' answered Redmond, with an anxious, scrutinising look.

'I am in a wicked, evil temper—that is all that ails me,' said Arthur simply. 'I can't forgive him—I don't see how I am ever to forgive him. The very ease and indifference with which he lifts the burden off seems to sharpen the sense of the wanton cruelty that laid it on; and, in a certain way, nothing can ever set my life straight again. Many will remember that there was something wrong who will never take the trouble to realise that it has been set right again. No; I can't forgive him. So there goes my hope of having found something more precious among the ruins of my career and my ambition.'

His voice dropped, not as if he had ended all he might have said, but as though he half regretted having said so much. And Redmond sat musing a moment, puzzled and yet enlightened by the deep sadness of the last words.

'You might have patience with yourself,' he said at last. 'No doubt the sooner one can forget and forgive a blow the better, but just when all the nerves are tingling with it is not the most hopeful time to attempt it. Try to forget him, for the time at any rate. I can't tell you how glad I am to hear this. It will make all the difference to *you* I can well believe, though none of those who knew you personally can have needed this to clear you in their eyes. What is to be the next step ?'

'I have hardly realised. He will come whenever I choose, to make his statement before witnesses—the sooner the better, I expect, if he really wants to go abroad.'

'Well, one thing is certain, you can't and won't travel this afternoon. We will wire to your brother, and if you are able you shall see Mr. Waterlow to-morrow. Who would you like to have to meet him ?'

'You, if you don't mind. And—anybody else—it does not matter.'

'Excuse me, I should think it did matter. Had we not better wire to some of the college authorities—any of them that you think most likely to be able to come? And it might be well to have some local person—old Mr. Carstairs? He struck me the other day in court as being rather a sensible old autocrat. As for me, my testimony is not worth much, because

I imagine my neighbours think me an idiot or a madman ! But I should like to be present, of course ; and in some quarters, at a distance, my name may go for something.'

Redmond coloured a little as he spoke of the old squire who had taken upon himself to reprimand him not so long since. But the way in which he threw himself into the situation, and his actually proposing to encounter the dignitaries when they should arrive, were equally surprising and welcome to his friend.

Arthur sat up, and for the first time returned Redmond's questioning look by one as keen.

'I am a fool !' he said, 'and nothing could be wiser or kinder than what you propose. So be it, if you will be so good. But you have not only *my* affairs to consider. Doesn't Sir Francis Carroll come to-morrow ?'

'Yes,' said Redmond ; and in spite as it were of himself a half-smile stole up into his dark eyes, so full of meaning that it would almost have enlightened Arthur even without his former suspicions.

'It is so, then ?' he said, holding out his hand. 'I knew it was only a matter of time, but I am glad it has waited no longer. Well, she is a fortunate princess, and all the fairies must have been at her christening, for they gave her not only beauty and goodness but the grace to know a true heart when it was offered her, and to choose her own happiness.'

'Thank you,' said Redmond rather huskily, wringing the fingers nearly off in his powerful left-handed grip. 'I only wish I could hope to persuade Sir Francis of that. But under the circumstances—well, to speak the truth, I feel my own unworthiness too keenly to have much hope that he will ever consent.'

'As to that, your friends must speak. But indeed I think you may trust your fair princess both to know her own mind and to get her own way without either grieving or disobeying her father. Where is she now ? I must go and congratulate her.'

'You will do nothing of the kind, my friend. You have had just about as much as you can stand. We will ring for Allen and send off those telegrams, and then you will try and get a little rest.'

Arthur laughed, and contented himself with dictating his messages, while Redmond wrote them in his strong, curious,

left-handed writing ; and when they were gone he dropped his face into his hands for a moment.

‘That brings it home !’ he said, looking up with a smile ; but he said it dreamily, and in less than ten minutes after he had lain down again he was fast asleep.

CHAPTER XXII.

FRIENDSHIP.

‘Shadows of three dead men
Walked in the walks with me,
Shadows of three dead men,
And thou wast one of the three.’

It was another ten days before Arthur saw Cross Rigg and Lesley, impatient though he was to see the latter. He wrote to her, telling her why he was bound in the first place to go and see his brother ; but he asked for no answer, and got none.

Directly the momentous interview with Theodore Waterlow was over, and Arthur had received the warm congratulations of two of his old colleagues who were present, he started for Kenyon Court, and reached it late in the evening, so worn out that he was fit for nothing but to go to bed. He saw neither Lady Kenyon nor Sir Robert that night, and when they met the next morning it was with very mingled feelings. It was a great shock to Arthur to see the changes that mortal illness had already made in his brother, and the yearning of natural affection was all the more painful at that moment because there had never been the sympathy between them that would have made it possible to speak freely of what was in both their minds. But there was a good deal of dignity now in Sir Robert’s slow, guarded speech—in his resolute ignoring of his own sufferings and natural regrets ; and if he did not make it easy to sympathise with him, he at any rate made it easy to pass on to other matters.

And it was not in human nature not to rejoice in the news that Arthur had to tell. Nothing but the reversing of the doom that had been pronounced upon her husband could so have gladdened poor Lady Kenyon ; and Sir Robert, after making

every possible inquiry and anticipating every conceivable cavil, warmed up into a positive glow of congratulation.

Upon which Arthur did what pride would never have let him do while circumstances still seemed to be against him, and spoke out the thought of his heart, in that kind of reproach that is so much more loving than a resentful silence.

'You might have known me better, Robert,' he said, smiling rather sadly. 'I could almost believe that you were never quite *sure* I did not do it.' Sir Robert looked startled, almost shocked, and answered in what was, for him, quite a hurried and impulsive fashion.

'No! No, Arthur!—not that. I am very sorry—I was to blame indeed—if I ever allowed you to think that.'

He stopped short for a moment, then went on with an evident struggle against his habitual reserve—reserve which still so far triumphed as to make his words hardly intelligible.

'It is true, I have felt of late that I may not have been quite kind, or generous; that I never made you feel that you had my full sympathy. But it was not because I had any doubt of you—I would as soon have doubted myself. It went much farther back than that; and the fault was in nothing that you ever did, or left undone. Regrets come too late now, as they generally do, but believe me, I do regret.'

'I don't want you to do that,' said Arthur frankly. 'It's all right now. What you have said has taken the sting out of old recollections. We can forget all about it now; but I am glad we have had it out.'

'So am I,' said Sir Robert; and then he went on, most unexpectedly, 'When I meet our father he will want first of all to know whether I have been good to you, and I shall not be able to answer as I could have wished. But I shall be glad to be able to tell him that it was all right between us at the last.'

'You never acted otherwise than kindly by me, Bob,' answered Arthur, something in his brother's tone bringing to his lips the old name, hardly ever used since they had been at school together. 'He will know that, whether you tell him so or not.'

Their hands met in a close, lingering clasp, as perhaps they had never met before. Both hands were thin and wasted just then, but Arthur's was cool and full of life, while Sir Robert's was burning with the fever of that pain for which he made no moan and asked no pity. Their eyes met, too, in that one

recognising look of a lifetime which is so often both greeting and farewell.

It was Arthur's lip that quivered, for as so often happens the pathos of leaving 'the warm precincts of the cheerful day' was more apparent to the one who was to stay than to him who had to go.

Arthur had his own reserves, less apparent but more impenetrable than those of his elder brother. He did not speak aloud, but in his own mind he went on to complete the message to his father—to the old man who had loved him so well.

'Tell him that I know the worth of his stainless record better now than when he left us—that I know now how hard it may be to be fairly honest. Tell him that, God helping me, I will keep what he handed down to us; that I shall not be ashamed to face him when we meet.'

Although the idea of cutting off the entail had been gladly abandoned by both brothers, there was much to be discussed and arranged between them; and Sir Robert was always somewhat tedious and precise, and now not at all in a state to be hurried, so that each item of business took up a good deal of time, and Arthur had to restrain his impatience as best he might.

More than once he debated with himself as to whether he ought not to tell his elder brother of his intentions with regard to Lesley, but came to the conclusion at last that in the circumstances it would only be to distress Sir Robert for nothing. There was nothing that he could do, let him dislike ever so much the idea of such a future Lady Kenyon; and since he could not be expected to like it, and would probably have no time to get accustomed to it, it seemed best that he should remain in ignorance of the probability.

And now at last the time had come when Arthur could leave home without seeming unkind. When he left the train he took a dogcart in the town, and drove straight through Ashden to Cross Rigg, not waiting even to report himself at Lassington, where he had been warmly invited to return as soon as possible.

The late summer glow over everything, the fresh, cool wind of those uplands, the far blue distances—all reminded him of that time of his first arrival, which seemed now half a lifetime ago.

How incredible it would have sounded then had he been told that in a year's time the cloud would have lifted, his career would be open to him once more, and that he would be hurrying back to the scene of his exile to ask a rough moorland farmer's granddaughter to share his lot, with all its hopes and prospects!

With regard to the first, Arthur knew right well that the poles of his life had shifted, that what once seemed a large and lofty aim was now not great enough to strive for.

In one sense, he would always have many hopes, many aims, and many interests, just as had always been the case. But from the first there had been one fixed ambition underlying all; and so there was still; and that was changed. From henceforth he would be content with what men call small things, with a narrow routine of duty that a much less brilliant intellect could do to all appearance just as well, content if once or twice in a lifetime it might be given to him to answer the deep appeal of soul to soul.

In respect of the other matter, ardent and impetuous as he was by nature, Arthur had more than once asked himself a question that he would not have asked had he been ten years younger.

Now that he was no longer 'damaged goods,' now that it was no longer merely a question, please God, of making the best of a bad matter, did he truly desire to make this girl his wife, who only by a strenuous effort on the part of both could take her place in his world? If it had been possible, as it was not, to leave Lesley's claims out of the question, did he for his own sake desire that she should love him?

It was to the world's opinion, to the opinion of his friends, that Arthur paid the compliment of the reiterated question; but the answer was ever and always the same.

To justify himself to others he might dwell upon her beauty and grace and refinement, her capability of being and doing all that would be expected of her; but at heart and in truth it might all have been summed up in the old question and answer—

'In what hath thy beloved surpassed
So much all others? *She was mine!*'

He knew now that he had felt that Lesley belonged to him almost from the first moment of their meeting; had felt that

nameless movement of interest and possession which is one of the choicest and tenderest ingredients in that strange mixture which we call Love.

And so, with little doubt as to the ultimate prosperity of his suit, but with heart throbbing like a boy's, Arthur came to where the twin old manor houses stood by the side of the lonely road, and sending away the dogcart and its driver, passed in under the mouldering gateway.

It was Mrs. Sherwin who answered his knock, and gave him a pleased and friendly greeting, without losing that look of abstracted sadness that was the habitual expression of her fine dark face.

Arthur noticed it afresh, and wondered whether Lesley, if life had gone amiss with her, would have come to wear that look also. He was characteristically, almost pathetically, confident that life could not go amiss with the girl he loved, now that he was come to woo her.

He said nothing to Mrs. Sherwin of his plans and intentions; and she, after her manner, asked him no questions, but invited him to step into his own sitting-room, remarking that she believed that he would find it as he left it. It was indeed as he had left it, only a little neater, and he recognised Lesley's hand in the dainty order of all his belongings. Looking round the room, and thinking of all those humble friends and acquaintances down yonder on the embankment, whose interests had made a part of his life here, he was half sorry to think that circumstances would now inevitably call him away from them before long. And then, with a smile at himself, he remembered the prisoner who 'regained his freedom with a sigh,' and asked Mrs. Sherwin to tell Lesley that he was surprised she had not come at once to welcome him back again.

She smiled gravely and went away, and in a few moments more Lesley entered the room.

The first thing that struck Arthur was that she was in black, and that he had never seen her in black before, and next—almost simultaneously—that her beautiful face had got the very look of which he had just been thinking as a foregone possibility—the look of one who has taken Sorrow home to live with her, as an habitual guest whose presence is to disturb no one.

It dismayed him, he hardly could have told why, and dismay

made him the more impatient, who had never been the most patient of men.

He was beside her in a moment, and had taken both her hands in his.

'Child!' he said, almost imperiously. 'You know what I have come back for? Are you not glad to see me?'

'I am most glad to see you back alive and well,' she answered, with the little formality that gave a quaint grace to her speech. 'But not that you should come for what you mentioned in your letter. You must forget that ever you wrote that letter, and I will try to forget it too; and then it will not matter.'

Arthur looked at her keenly.

'Have you heard that circumstances have changed with me for the better since I wrote?' he asked.

'Yes,' she answered, somewhat unwillingly. 'Some one from Lassington told my grandfather.'

'I knew it! I did not think that you would try to dismiss me so coolly if you had thought that I was ruined and miserable. But why, because I have got back my own again, should you refuse me what I hoped was my own too? Why should you try to forget a question that I very much want to have answered?'

'It makes no difference to *me*,' said Lesley steadily. 'But as for you, it would never have been fitting for you to marry me, and now it is more unfitting than ever—'

She did not pause, but her grave, slow speech seemed to need time and effort to frame, and Arthur broke in upon it.

'I am the best judge of that. I am a great deal older than you, Lesley—too old not to know very well what I want. I know the world too, as you do not. I know what small and easy matters those are, which perhaps look big enough to frighten you. Never mind what is fitting for me—though it is like the noble girl you are to consider the other side of the question rather than your own. The only question of importance for both of us is whether you can give your love in exchange for the true, honest love I have for you?'

Lesley had drawn her hands from his, and had stepped back a little, until the great oak chest that stood in the window recess was between them.

She looked down, and half absently stroked the sleeve of her black dress.

'The man who loved me best is dead,' she said, after a moment. 'And from this time forward I have but one answer, whoever speaks to me of love and of marriage. No!—and No!—and always No! Valentine loved me—and he is dead.'

A sob shook the last words, and two great tears gleamed an instant on her eyelashes and fell on the black sleeve, but otherwise she stood as still as a statue, and looked neither right nor left.

Arthur caught his breath, with the baffled sensation of a man who has found a way blocked that he had thought to find open.

He was not ordinarily too soon discouraged, and he could have sworn that Lesley was not indifferent to him. But the dead man who had loved *him* also seemed to stand between them, a rival more formidable than any living one.

Arthur had always felt that Valentine's feeling for his cousin needed the most delicate handling, and deserved the fullest recognition. And now, with the fresh-cut sods hardly withered over the grave to which he had taken his young manhood, with its aureole of heroism, there seemed a kind of brutality in pressing forward to snatch what would have been the prize and crown of his life. No man would have dared as yet to speak of love to his widow, and this was an offence against the same unwritten code—or so it appeared now.

Some instinct more subtle than reason must have taught this unlessoned girl what was the only weapon that could be of any avail in repulsing this lover of hers, who could and would so easily have overborne her objections made for his own good; or even her protest—if she had dared to make it—that she did not care for him.

Now he stood silent, his ardour checked, his pleading suddenly made to seem heartless and even indelicate. He had not often been jealous of Valentine living, but he felt a movement now of angry jealousy towards Valentine in his grave. If he had only been alive now he would have had to be reckoned with; and he would have had to stand aside in spite of the friendship that there had been between them. But who could bid him stand aside whom Death had canonised?

Arthur turned half petulantly towards the window, and stood looking out with eyes that did not see the familiar prospect; and Lesley knew that she had conquered, and was forlornly

glad, as a woman may be of a victory that costs her more than a defeat.

'I loved him too !' said Arthur after a moment. 'If he had lived you would have had to choose between us, and if you had not chosen him you would have done him no wrong. But you make it impossible for me to say another word, *now*. I suppose I was too bold—I did not think you would have sent me away, Lesley !'

'You have been very good to me, and I shall never forget you,' she answered in half a whisper. 'But there are other things to remember. I shall not marry any one, now Valentine is dead !'

Remembering her age, her utter ignorance and inexperience, Arthur felt a kind of wrathful amusement, a desire to tell her plainly that she did not know what she was talking about. But looking at her grave, steadfast face the words were once more checked upon his lips. It seemed very probable that she would abide by what she had said ; that at any rate no one would change her decision unless by convincing her understanding ; and that the time for that was not yet come. It was the first check given to the joy and triumph of his rehabilitation, and it hurt him, though he was far from believing that the last word had yet been said in the matter.

'Then, for the present, we must say goodbye,' he said after a moment, slowly and unwillingly. 'You have promised not to forget me, Lesley, and I must be content with that—now. You will see whether I forget.'

Lesley's dark eyes, with that unfathomable sadness in them, met his for a moment. The thought in her mind was, '*You will forget, out there in the world, and no one shall blame you. But I will stay here and remember.*' Outwardly, her black dress, and the remote, abstracted look, as of one who has nothing to hope nor to fear from the present, were all in keeping. If she had worn widow's weeds for Valentine Elliot she could hardly have looked less ready to be wooed and won by another man.

And though Arthur might protest to himself that it was only for the time, that no romantic fancy of a girl could stand in the long run against his love and his determination, the baffled, half-angry feeling kept him company all the way down to Lassington. The door that was locked in his face seemed to be a very stout one, and at present he did not see how to get the key.

However things had gone with him he had meant to spend the next night or two at Lassington ; and after that he meant to find some other quarters for himself, since it would be better not to return to Cross Rigg. For he must remain in the neighbourhood for some time, till he could adjust the various claims upon him. Arthur's duties on the embankment and in his iron building were now being fulfilled by a stop gap, but he felt that he would prefer to take them up again for as long as his brother could spare him from Kenyon Court, and then if possible to choose his own successor. He knew too that he might be of use to Redmond Vaughan as a link with the outside world, and as a companion to Sir Francis, who was now staying at the Hall. Plainly, there was enough to do and to think of, though his own personal dream of happiness must remain in abeyance for the time.

And Arthur would not have been himself if he had not come back suddenly and completely to the present when he reached Lassington—to observe with pleasure Redmond's recovered spirits—to congratulate Vanessa upon the way in which she was bringing him more or less into touch with the ordinary world—to make acquaintance with Sir Francis Carroll, and to discover more mutual friends than might have been supposed possible, considering that one of them had spent his life in the West and the other in the East—and finally to discuss the whole situation with Winifred Marlowe, and gather the family politics and her own opinion from that sensible young woman, as if she were the one person whom he had come back to Lassington to see.

She was used to that manner of his by this time, and perhaps it warmed her heart with a sense of comradeship, as on a chill winter day a little fire is better than an empty grate. But there was one question that she would have liked to ask in return. *'Have you been to Cross Rigg? And what kind of reception did you get there?'* It might have seemed natural enough that she should ask, considering the confidence that Arthur had ever placed in her ; but the words never got so far as her lips, and it was a kind of half-guilty consciousness that kept them back.

They were still talking when their host appeared, looking somehow graver than he had done when Arthur first arrived. And presently, upon some excuse, Redmond took Arthur away with him into the library.

It was so obvious that he wished to be alone with his guest,

and that something was coming, that Arthur sat down and waited for it to come, wondering what it might be, but asking no questions.

Redmond never fidgeted, but he was plainly at a loss how to begin, and he went to the window and stood there, turning a little away.

'Do you remember,' he said at last, 'when I came in, after Theodore Waterlow had been to see you that first time? You said to me that you couldn't forgive him, you know—that you couldn't begin to feel the thing properly until you had got him out of the foreground. . . . Have you got him out of the foreground yet?'

'Yes, perhaps I have,' said Arthur soberly, and speaking with much more deliberation than usual. 'On the whole I suppose that he did not do me so much harm after all; that I would not have the thing *not* have happened, in spite of all that it cost me.'

'Do you feel, then, as though you could perhaps forgive him, now?'

'I—don't—quite—know—what one means by forgiving. I don't wish him any harm. I suppose if he needed a good turn, and there was no one else to do it, I should not object to having the chance to show that I bore no malice. But as to thinking charitably of him . . . !'

'I thought,' said Redmond slowly, 'when he read that confession of his here in this room, that he was really ashamed and sorry. He seemed to have more than the usual difficulty in owning it; to have a curious objection to allowing that he could be moved by the feelings that move other people; but I do think that in his heart he repented.'

'That notion did cross my mind too. He certainly did not give it utterance, so I suppose, since it impressed us both, the repentance—of a sort—must have been there. Well, I do forgive him; I will forgive him more thoroughly yet, God helping me.'

The words were still spoken slowly and consideringly, and it was very unlike Arthur Kenyon not to be wondering even as he spoke what reason the other could have for questioning him. But he was deep in thought still, questioning his own soul, and Redmond's voice was to him abstract, impersonal—like that voice that we sometimes call Conscience.

Redmond came and sat down opposite to him.

'I thought you would feel like that,' he said. 'I have something to tell you, and I don't know quite how to put it. . . . Mr. Waterlow, the uncle, came just now and asked to see me. He had had a telegram.'

'Go on,' said Arthur, paling a little.

'You know *he* was going abroad—to the Pacific by way of San Francisco, I believe. He sailed in the *Vailima*, and she was run into the night before last, and sunk in the Channel. Thirty lives were lost, and—Theodore Waterlow was among them.'

'God have mercy on him!—and on us all!' said Arthur after a moment, rather unsteadily, and he sat still, with his face buried in his hands; while Redmond went back to the window, and his thoughts fled to Cross Rigg and his ancestor's carven prayer—'*On all sinful souls, blessed Lord, have Thou mercy.*'

Presently Arthur came to him, laying a hand for a moment on his shoulder.

'Thank you,' he said very gravely. 'I shall be thankful to you all my life for making me sure that I forgave him, before I knew that he was dead. I can't forget, though, that if he had not repented first, after his fashion, he would have carried his secret to the bottom of the sea with him, and I should have had to bear that burden to my grave. It—frightens one, I think—'

He broke off abruptly, and went away: went to his own room and was seen no more that night. He had met the worst of his troubles with a ready smile and a fluent tongue, but this awed and silenced him, and what he thought or felt about it he kept, then and always, 'to himself and to God.'

It was not until two or three days later that he and Winifred had any more private conferences, but then, walking in the garden in the lingering late summer twilight, an impulse seized him to complete the confidence that he had once begun to place in her, and to see what a woman's fine instinct would make of the deadlock to which the situation seemed to have come.

'It serves me right, I suppose,' he ended, with a touch of rueful bitterness. 'I let myself be held back by what I see now to have been a fine-drawn scruple, more concerned with my own state of mind than with hers. And now I find

myself confronted with another fine-drawn scruple, which decency seems to forbid me to brush aside.'

'Did you never think before that she cared for her cousin?' asked Winifred, rather as though she was thinking of something else.

'No,' said Arthur, with a little unnecessary vehemence. 'It was always as clear to me that she did not care for him as that he cared for her. He said as much himself, poor fellow! when he was dying. . . . One says "poor fellow" by a sort of foolish habit,' he added, more gently, 'though I am sure I don't know why any of us should presume to pity him.'

Winifred was still as it seemed deep in thought, and she made no answer till Arthur asked almost humbly—

'What would you advise? What do you think about it all?'

'Why, I hope that you are not one of those men who think that nothing is ever allowable but the bare and absolute truth. I think that Miss Lesley Sherwin is a very clever girl, and also a very unselfish one. I think that she has deceived you, though with the very noblest intentions, and probably without saying one actually untrue word.'

'I don't understand you. Why should she want to deceive me?'

They had reached a dusky path in the shrubbery and Winifred stood still.

'Must I confess, too?' she said; and if Arthur had been in the humour to be observant he might have noticed that she spoke with the slow toneless utterance that tells of effort. 'When you told me of this before—I was curious, I suppose—it is a woman's prerogative, you know. I wanted to hear the other side of the story, and—I went to see *her*.'

'You went to see Lesley? Tell me—what did she say to you? What did you think——?'

'Hush! let me tell this story in my own way. Perhaps I had meant to question her, but it was she who questioned me. I knew that she cared for you, and she knew that I knew it. She did not attempt to disguise that;—all she wanted to know was whether it would be good for a man in your position to marry a girl in hers.'

'And you?—what did you say to her?'

'What could I say but what I thought? And what could I think but what the world thinks?—that such marriages

involve even more than the usual amount of risk, and that no third person could dare to advise them——?’

‘I should not have expected *you* to take so conventional a view of the matter.’

‘The more conventional a woman is, the safer and happier she will most likely be ! I could not truthfully have told her that it was generally considered to be a good thing for a man to marry out of his own station in life ; and I should have had to lie very convincingly to have had any chance of being believed. So I suppose she cast about to see how she could best send you away from her, and decided upon the best—perhaps the only way.’

There was a moment's silence. Winifred's voice had not quaked, but her heart did. She was expecting blame, or at the least reproach. At best she knew what he must be thinking, and it was very bitter to her.

She had never looked that he should think of her often, but now and then he might have remembered that they had been good comrades always, and have spared her a kindly thought or so. Now, that was all over. She had meddled—had done harm—had made herself the mouthpiece of that wise world's opinion which would vex him all the more because he must needs own that it was most often right.

‘I think,’ said Arthur at last—and his voice was very gentle, almost reverential—‘I think that there is hardly another woman in the world who would have been so perfectly frank as you have been. It is not my part to blame you for having spoken with absolute honesty to *her*, when I have such cause to thank you for your honesty to *me*. I can never thank you enough for what you have told me. As for your opinion—no doubt you are right, in nine cases out of ten. Only this happens to be the tenth.’

His sudden change of front almost took Winifred's breath away. It seemed to her that she thrust her relief and gladness into the deepest recesses of her soul, as one might hide a thing too precious to be shown in public, meaning to take it out and gloat upon it afterwards. Then she braced herself to the requirements of the moment.

‘Granted that it is the tenth,’ she said, ‘what do you propose to do now ?’

‘How can I tell ? You have told me what the difficulty is, though ; and that is a great matter. It is a fine-drawn scruple still, but one that *I* shall have no scruple in combatting.’

They walked on in silence, Arthur perhaps rehearsing arguments with Lesley, and Winifred arguing with herself. Arthur was just going to speak again when his companion turned to him.

'Mind,' she said, 'I am not sure that she is not right. She is everything that is noble and beautiful—everything that you please—but she has *not* had the education that will be expected in the position into which you would bring her; and she knows it. You ought to be very careful how you try to influence her. It may be possible to induce a conscientious woman to act contrary to her conscience, but I think it is not possible to make her happy afterwards—unless she ceases to be conscientious. And there is something more than sentimental nonsense in the story of the Lady of Burleigh.'

'Then—what am I to do?' asked Arthur, between impatience and dismay.'

'You have been very generous,' said Winifred slowly; 'will you be more generous still, and trust to my discretion, or at any rate to my goodwill? Will you trust me to interfere again, and, since I did the mischief, to try and find out how it may be undone, and those legitimate scruples not set aside but satisfied.'

'I will—I do trust you. I will not boast of my confidence, but indeed I could give you no greater proof of it. You shall do—whatever your kind heart and wise head suggest.'

'Thank you,' Winifred answered, as though she had asked a favour; and she said no more.

'Shake hands on it,' said Arthur, and then with a boyish and half-ashamed laugh, 'You will not be very long before you—interfere—will you?'

'No longer than to-morrow, unless I am prevented.' She smiled a little amused smile as she promised, and if she sighed it was in secret. And then it seemed to her that even friendship need not demand that she should bear any more just then, and she wished her companion good-night and went away through the darkening garden, with a heart that was still and overcast, like the still, shadowy landscape.

'My story is not quite done yet,' she said to herself, 'but I am to make haste and finish it to-morrow; and then—what? I shall find out in time, I suppose. And meanwhile, I have loved worthily, and I have friendship in return—I am better off than most women!'

Winifred was quite capable of being amused at the diplomatic audacity with which Arthur Kenyon secured a private interview with her the following evening. She might even have teased him by not seconding his efforts at first, but that for her own sake she preferred to have it over. Indeed, she hardly waited for his eager question before she began her story.

'Well! I have seen her; and I am as sure as can be that she cares for you; and as sure also that she will never do what she does not feel to be right. She admitted to me, almost in so many words, that the real obstacle was her own want of education—that she was afraid that the world would think less of you if you had an uneducated wife, and that you would inevitably in the end come to think less of *her*.'

'If she will discuss the question with me, that is something,' said Arthur hopefully. 'I have two absolute convictions. One is that, like Portia, she "is not yet so old but that she can learn"—the other, that I love her quite well enough as she is. But the two seem to involve a sort of contradiction!'

'It is by the first that you must abide if you are ever to win her,' answered Winifred; 'and upon that I have something to say.'

She hesitated, stopped to pick a 'sweet Sultan,' and held it to her face as though its sweet aromatic scent helped to arrange her ideas. Perhaps it did, at any rate the unique indescribable perfume was bitter-sweet to her all her life long, but more sweet than bitter, with a memory of pain and renunciation and a lofty gladness transcending both.

'I have a plan,' she said, 'and I think I can win her consent to it, if you will give yours. I have freedom and independence, as you know. Vanessa will not need me any more now, and my next step in life is not yet decided upon. I have experience in educating girls, or rather in helping girls to educate themselves. I will take charge of Lesley, and show her something of the world of books, and something too of the world of cultivated women. I don't doubt her capability to take in all that she will need to save her from a feeling of inferiority when she comes to mix with ordinary people. She may easily come to know as much as the average woman of good family, without taking longer than even your impatience will allow us. Come to me for your wife in two years' time, and I think I may undertake that she shall have no cause to be afraid of any duties or responsibilities that may lie before her.'

Did Arthur Kenyon, who saw, or guessed at, so much that escapes ordinary people, have any guess as to what gave this offer its special nobility of unselfishness ?

It is hard to say, for if any guess came to him, he shut his eyes and stopped his ears to it, and would no more have named it to himself than to another.

He took the shapely, capable hand that was one of Winifred's few beauties, and lifted it to his lips.

'God bless you for the thought,' he said. 'If we can carry it out I shall ask nothing better. Never any man had truer friends than I have had ; and I count you the first and the truest.'

'*I am happier than most women,*' said Winifred again, in the depths of her own heart ; and silently, through the soft summer twilight, they walked back to the house together.

(Concluded.)

FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW.

**Epigrams in
Real Life.** No, it is not possible in real life, at least not in the real life I have met, to live up to the brilliance of the conversation of several heroines in modern novels. I read a book years ago—the ‘Dolly Dialogues’ in fact—and thought perhaps that kind of thing came with years and the rubs of life. So I was hopeful that even my conversation might rise to that sparkling, deep yet frothy standard, and waited. Last year I read Miss Fowler’s book, ‘Isabel Carnaby,’ and remembered that age and rubs had as yet done nothing for me. I compared notes with my friends to find if they, too, found themselves rising to the height of that heroine’s conversation. But they, one and all, disclaimed it. So we were discouraged in company, and things seemed brighter for companionship. Since then I have read two other modern novels, and lost all hope. The heroines are too high for me. Sometimes, quite by accident, I stumble into wit, or let fall a stray phrase which approximates to an epigram, and I am delighted and think that perhaps, even to me, the day and the hour of brilliancy has arrived. But it has not. It is only a flash in the pan. I could not keep it up for six or even two pages, if I were to be electrocuted for lack of it. It was not much that I wanted, only to scintillate for my little hour. But to be a heroine of that sort, to talk in concentrated essences and compressed epigrams for three hours on end I have discovered it is necessary to begin very young, and never to attempt it without having on your most special, smartest evening dress. Perhaps being crossed in love might help it on, but of that I am not sure. But I am sure that all the women (and men, too, with apologies) whom I meet do not indulge in conversation so radiant, and I certainly never do myself. It is very depressing to find all one’s chances of being a heroine in a book gone. Does any fellow-sufferer weep with me?

**A Training
College for
Lady
Colonists.**

Is there not something in this idea expressed by a lady from Toronto ? She says :—

'Lord Lorne, one of Canada's most successful Governors-General, warmly advocated the Canadian North-West as a field for the employment of Great Britain's "superfluous women" of the better class, and as during his term of office he made himself thoroughly familiar with the conditions of life in that part of the Empire, his opinions on the subject are of considerable value. And if, as we are told, an increasing number of women in the British Isles are unable to find employment usually open to their sex, surely our Canadian North-West should profit by such a condition of affairs. England has her training-schools for the Colonies well established ; but these are not open to women. Female emigration in the lower rank of life has, indeed, through public and private enterprise, received great encouragement, but the time is now ripe for a movement in the interests of the numerous gentlewomen who are capitalists in a small way, and who find the interest obtainable shrinking yearly. Often such a one is the daughter of a small squire or landowner. With her inherited instincts, and a few months of practical work in such an institute as that now advocated, she would be soon fitted to take up land in this country, and invest her capital at a much higher rate of interest in Canada than she could ever hope to get at home. Daughters of British parents cannot go upon Canadian farms in the first instance to gain their experience as the sons do, nor would it be advisable for them to do so, as the average Canadian household has itself much to learn as yet in the way of domestic economics. But if in connection with one of the Government experimental farms in the North-West a training school for lady colonists were established, there could be little doubt of its ultimate success, particularly if the names of prominent Canadian, as well as English, women were on the list of its patronesses. There can be no doubt about the mutual value of such an enterprise to the Canadian North-West on the one hand, and on the other to the English lady with a small stock of capital but a large reserve of energy and courage.'

Is this not a matter which some women's society might take up ? There is, I am told, at least one college in England where training, supposed to fit the pupils for Colonial life, is given, but for some reason or other the colleges do not seem

to be working in a very large way. For one thing, are they well enough known, so that suitable ladies from all over the country may know of them, and the opening into new life they offer? Also are they in sufficiently close touch with the agencies and the right people in the Colonies to be able to pass on their pupils straight to remunerative work? The suggestion as to the enlisting of the sympathy of prominent Colonial ladies is also one worthy of consideration. In these days we cannot afford to forget the prospects of new life and work that open up to us in the newer lands over the sea.

* * * * *

**Fifteen
hours' Vigil.**

The age is still heroic. Sometimes it has been doubted. It has seemed as though four inches of collar and the necessity for keeping abreast of the latest thing in ties had left the youth of our end of the century no time for heroism, for patience and daring. And as for the girls, one wondered where such things could come into their lives filled to the brim with the pursuit of pleasure. But the battles of the Soudan were reassuring, even the curled dandies of the Guards marched and thirsted and baited like men of old time. And there are several incidents met with lately which seem to give one new confidence in the staying qualities of women. But now we can be sure that we can as a nation still watch and wait and keep vigil, ever since the Lydia Thompson *matinée* at the Lyceum. It was to be a monster collection of players who, each in their time, somewhere between two and six, would play a little part, make their exits and their entrances, which were their contribution to the Annuity Fund for an aged sick sister actress. That was all excellent and natural. The astonishing part of it to me, who grudge the ten minutes I sit waiting at the play for the next act to begin, is that there were men, most of them were, however, women, who arrived at the theatre before midnight on the preceding day, armed with satchels loaded with provisions for three meals and a camp-stool. There they sat outside the pit door, keeping vigil throughout the night, watching the first early greyness of dawn creep in, seeing the early milkmen begin their rounds, the carts going eastward, the carriages, with yawning occupants in evening dress, going west, and then sunrise and the day. There they sat or stood, hour after hour, stopped, breakfasted, lunched, and their

number grew with every hour. Fifteen hours of open-air night vigil, and at the end—a play. It is stupendous. It reveals a tenacity of purpose, a strength of limb, and a power of suppressing sleep which, if rightly applied, would spell revolution, or social reformation, or a religious revival surpassing any before attempted. But, in order to attain the end of seeing a group of players, the means seem to me, who am merely one who looks at the world from my window, a little out of proportion.

* * * * *

A gathering of many Women from many Lands. There is to be held in London this month of June a meeting of women from the United States, Canada, Germany, Sweden, Great Britain and Ireland, New Zealand, New South Wales and Italy, France, Holland, Denmark, Belgium, Finland and Switzerland. So that it may, without exaggeration, be called, as indeed it is called, 'An International Council of Women,' and it is, in its turn, composed of 'National Councils of Women.' Its President, Lady Aberdeen, is much more than a nominal president. She is one of the vitalising forces of the body. The Canadian National Council, under her presidency, made itself a thing to be felt.

'And what good comes of it at last?' queries the level-headed general public. This same, level-headed general public, by the way, does great service often by its insistence, or its demand for something practical to come out of all our societies and associations. Now this is what the International Council, meeting every five years in one of the great cities of the world, claims to be and do. I give the words of the President :

1. To provide a means of communication between women's organisations in all countries.

2. To provide opportunities for women to meet together from all parts of the world to confer upon questions relating to the welfare of the family and the commonwealth.

Its formation is due to a company of earnest American women, who, after consultation with friends in England and France, decided to convene a representative assembly of delegates from as many countries as possible at Washington, in 1888, to consider the possibility of organising International Councils of Women. It elected Mrs. Fawcett as its first President, Miss Clara Barton, of the Red Cross Society, as its

Vice-President, and Mrs. Foster Avery as its Corresponding Secretary.

The results of its influence can at present be traced through the results of the work of the National Councils, which it has been the means of forming.

These can show good proof of having been instrumental in breaking down prejudice, and in promoting mutual understanding and charity between adherents of essentially different faiths, races, parties, and of providing a centre round which all who desire to labour for the good of humanity can unite for the common cause.

In addition, they can claim that—

a. They have collected and spread correct information about women's work, its needs and its opportunities.

b. They have prevented the overlapping and multiplication of organisations for kindred causes.

c. They have given women workers the opportunity of widening their knowledge and of increasing their faith and charity by interchange of views and personal touch with other workers whom they would not otherwise meet.

d. Through their united and representative influence, local and national councils have been able to help local, municipal, and legislative bodies to effect much in the reform and administration of various laws bearing on women and children and on the home.

If the International Congress, meeting this year in our great city, can accomplish only a fraction of the good formulated, it will surely have been well worth the attempting.

* * * * *

The Girl from the Union. Control which does not lead one to dispense with control is worse than no control at all. This wise saw has been wrung from me by the considering of the case of the workhouse girl who, of all classes of girls, starts life with the biggest handicap of any. She is shot out into a life of comparative independence at the age of thirteen, just when she most needs wise counsel and kindly surveillance, and her previous training has been one of such close control that her thoughts almost have been under surveillance. In such situations in domestic service as are open to her youth and ignorance the work is often hard, the conditions disagreeable, and the mistress (often with the best intentions)

severe; and at hand, when an hour of freedom can be snatched, are temptations whose dangers the child cannot know. She has had less than her fair share of pleasure hitherto, she is not freely given any now, and she grasps at what she can, not knowing whether it is wholesome or the reverse. She falls in with bad companions, vanity may lead her into dishonesty, and when temptation comes in the guise of love, the natural impulses of the poor, starved young heart may lead her to hopeless ruin. Just now is a time when a lady, collective ladies working in conjunction if you will, might do so much good. Always remembering that a girl from the union is quite as much a human girl as their own daughters, that love, joy, and sweetness and beauty are things she longs for without knowing their names, and that if you do not give them her in one form she will take them in another. Here is gracious work waiting for gracious women.

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' competitions, see p. 716.)

FIRST SHELF.

June will be a busy month for many hard-working ladies. The Mothers' Union meetings have taken place in May, but the Annual G. F. S. gathering is in the third week in June, and that will hardly be over before the 'International Conference of Women' will meet in London under Lady Aberdeen, and absorb the usual autumn Conference of Women Workers. The names of Mrs. Creighton, Mrs. Benson, Lady Frederick Cavendish, Lady Laura Ridding, Miss Clifford, and many others promise that our English ladies will hold their own. Information can be obtained from the *Secretary, Members Mansions, 36, Victoria Street, S.W.*

The Women Writers' Dinner is to held at the 'Criterion,' on June 19th. Miss Ireland Blackburn is still its clever secretary, and with so many distinguished women in London it ought to be unusually brilliant.

VARIETY SUBJECT.

Chelsea China has got herself into a really serious difficulty. She has set a subject to which she finds it impossible to assign a prize. For if she gives the prize to too kind words for the China Cupboard remarks are obvious, and there is no great difference in literary merit between the eight papers sent in. She is reminded of a letter which she lately read in the *G. F. S. Associates' Journal* to the point that letters sent to editors were apt to be deceptive, as only *sympathetic* readers sent them in. A thousand thanks to the kind friends of the dear old PACKET. Would that their soft words would alone butter our parsnips! But we hope the writers will induce all their friends to spend hard shillings on this fountain of light and leading.

We depart, then, this month from our usual custom, and instead of giving a prize paper, remarks shall be quoted from each one sent in. But, dear readers, many of you refer to the 'old' PACKET in the days of 'An English Squire.' Old! He was but of yesterday. Go back to 'The Castle Builders,' and 'The Little Duke.'

Thanks to all who wish for 'more Chelsea China,' but our Cupboard is a good size already. *August*, a dear old friend who chooses to be anonymous, would like 'more editor, but no more ghosts,' some more religious papers by Miss Wordsworth or Miss Bramston—more but easier *Bog Oak*, continued Search Questions as they are, and no stories about children. She concludes: 'May the beloved PACKET long retain its delightful individuality and never become like other magazines!'

Emma thinks our distinguishing characteristic is up-to-dateness. Whatever we may *not* be we are invariably *fin de siècle*. We are flattered, as

this is *not* the reproach usually hurled at our hoary head. We gather that she thinks our stories and Search Questions sometimes a trifle *too fin de siècle*, but as she adds that she can imagine Jane Austen and Mrs. Gaskell writing for it with pleasure, and that it is always worth reading, and suitable for refined circles, she gives us high praise.

Miranda gives a pleasant conversation on our niceness, but doubts if we are quite 'as nice as we used to be.' We are not nearly so nice, but what is as nice now as when we read the last number curled up on the school-room window-seat on a half-holiday?

We thank *Doronicum* very much. She is a very old reader, and her praises are sweet to us. She greatly admires both the serials at present running.

Ruby hopes we may 'live on for unnumbered years' and lead our readers 'as always to the formation of nobler hearts.'

Einsam gives us some real criticism—first on our price, which she thinks should be halved, and then on our editing, in which she detects occasional errors. But she thinks us quite worth finding fault with.

Tartar likes the 'Women of all Nations,' and recurs to the Cameos, and to all the work of our late editor. We are glad she can still trace 'the same atmosphere of earnest and intellectual purity.' 'Everywhere,' she says, are the 'Angels of the Ideal brought into contact with the Real.'

Fa-ik goes back to our first little fat volumes but loves us still in our present shape. We assure her that the irregularity of which she complains is the fault of her bookseller. We always appear by the 28th of the month at latest, ready for the 1st.

Dear friends of the PACKET—get as many new subscribers for July as ever you can. There were once nine young ladies who bought a copy of 'Sir Charles Grandison,' and had it by turns to sleep with it under their pillows. But if nine young ladies join at one copy of the PACKET—then, much as they may love it, proprietors, publishers, editors, and contributors must work 'all for love and nothing for reward,' which in this work-a-day world is impossible!

No prize assigned for April.

SUBJECT FOR JUNE.

A conversation between Ethel May and Marcella Maxwell on 'our duty to our neighbour.'

SECOND SHELF.

HISTORICAL STUDY FOR APRIL.

John Bunyan.

Very good papers have been sent in on this subject, though some of the biographies quite exceed the limits of the China Cupboard. *Stanzerl's* is the best written and gives the most vivid impression of John Bunyan's remarkable personality. One more historical character will be set, and during the next six months we propose slightly to vary the plan.

JOHN BUNYAN.

There is a story told of a little new boy at Uppingham School who was being shown the pictures of great men in the Hall, and stopped before one of them to ask in astonishment, 'Was Euclid a man, then? I always thought he was a book!'

Readers of John Bunyan are liable to the same confusion of identity from a precisely opposite reason. It is not that the writer has too little personality, but that the book has so much, for the 'Pilgrim's Progress' is to many people just what the voice of the unseen fellow-traveller was to Christian as he went through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. It is the story of the pilgrimage which is the true life of Bunyan. The main outlines of his life from the outside point of view are easily told. He was born at Elstow in 1628, he died in London 1688. Between these two dates he changed from a Royalist to a Puritan, from a Churchman to a Nonconformist; he was happily married, and had four children; he was imprisoned in 1660 for 'holding conventicles,' omitted from the general gaol delivery on the Restoration, and not released till 1672. The first part of the 'Pilgrim's Progress' appeared in 1678, the second part in 1684, and the Holy War between the two in 1682. Of all this Bunyan takes no notice except in one famous line—'As I walked through the wilderness of this world I lighted on a certain place where was a Den,' for except the circumstance that Christian also had a wife and 'four small children' he seems to have kept his own outer life studiously apart from the story he had to tell of his spiritual experience.

As regards that experience most people seem agreed that Bunyan's account of it is only correct from his own point of view. It is not literal history. He describes himself as being 'full of all unrighteousness,' as 'delighting in all transgression against the law of God,' as the 'very ring-leader of all the youths that kept me company into all manner of vice and ungodliness,' but in actual fact all this tremendous depravity seems to reduce itself to a habit of using strong language, and an inclination to Sunday afternoon games on the village green. It is as useless to try and find crimes to match Bunyan's self-reproaches as it is to construct imaginary biographies of Dante in order to account for his heart-broken confession before Beatrice. Each pilgrim tells the story of 'how low he fell' looking back from the heights at the end of the journey, and no one else can see it in the same way unless he looks through the eyes of the speaker.

Turning from the author to the book one comes face to face with the inevitable question, 'What makes the "Pilgrim's Progress" an undisputed English classic?' There are many causes, but two, I think, are these—

First, Bunyan was singularly happy in his subject. Travellers' tales have been the world's delight from the days of Odysseus downwards, and they have also been taken into service by the Church from the very first, so that the journey has even overpowered the imagery of the fight as an allegory of the life of the soul. Pilgrimage in some form or other has been an instinct of the faithful, handed down from the time when Abraham set out to seek a country, deepened by the recollection of the wanderings of the children of Israel, reviving in the Middle Ages with the Crusades, and carried on through the *Commedia* and countless imitations till Bunyan took up the old story and told it again. The very scenery of the journey has worked itself into religious literature and art till it requires no explanation because it is a universal language. In some form or other we are constantly coming on the start from Egypt, the City of Destruction, the crossing of the water, whether it is the Red Sea or the Jordan or the flood of Noah with the Ark of the Church riding securely on the waves, and there is the definite entrance, the Gate of the Fold in Old Mosaics, the Porta di San Pietro and the Wicket Gate of later allegory, and so the pilgrim enters on the strait and narrow way, and under the conduct of a guide of many names he comes to the inevitable river at the end and sees 'the goal of all the saints,' Jerusalem the Golden, shining on the other side.

Bunyan found the framework of his story ready to his hand, with the charm of old association, combined with endless possibilities of new adventure, but the use he made of it was all his own, and in this lies the second cause of his wonderful success.

If one had to characterise the 'Pilgrim's Progress in one word, I think one would say its distinguishing feature is humanity. There are great masterpieces of literature which are only for one class of readers; there is no use in going to Dante for humour, or to Spenser for homely everyday portraiture, Milton is for scholars, Thomas à Kempis for the saints, but Homer and Shakspeare are for every one, and Bunyan shares the character of universality with them. Most people make acquaintance first with the 'Pilgrim's Progress' as the most delightful of Sunday fairy-stories, then they later delightedly awake to the fact that their childish literary instinct was perfectly correct, that there is character-drawing, and dramatic power, and wit, and sound English common sense in the old nursery classic, and later still, perhaps, they come to love the book still more tenderly for its human kindness, and for the sake of what lies under the stirring story of wandering and fighting, till the familiar phrases begin almost to take the sacredness that hangs round the words of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer.

It is one of the books that first takes the imagination captive, then the eager critical mind, and then settles down into the heart among the few books that are books no longer but the voices of dear friends.—STANZERL.

PRIZE WINNER FOR APRIL.

Miss C. Whidborne, Charanté, Torquay.

CLASS LIST FOR APRIL.

DISTINCTION.

Nora, Simple Simon.

CLASS I.

Grela, Ema, Skena Vau, Tom Til, Tartar, Lindum, Heckmondwike.

CLASS II.

Durusha, Ruby, Miranda.

SUBJECT FOR JUNE.

Bishop Ken.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR APRIL.

('Pleasure delights in contrasts.')

1. 'There's nothing in the world so sweet as love;
And next to love the sweetest thing is —.'
2. 'There is some soul of goodness in things —,
Would men observingly distil it out.'
3. 'He makes no friend who never made —.'
4. 'Whose welth was —, whose plentie made him —.'
5. 'Knowledge by Suffering entereth,
And Life is perfected by —.'

Fill the blanks and give full references to the above, and
6. Choose another quotation to match.

ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS.

(BULWER, LYTTON 'Last Days of Pompeii.' Bk. I. ch. 2.)

1. 'And next to love the sweetest thing is *hate*.'
(LONGFELLOW. 'The Spanish Student,' ii. 5.)
2. 'There is some soul of goodness in things *evil*.'
(SHAKESPERE. 'King Henry V.' iv.)
3. 'He makes no friend, who never made a *foe*.'
(TENNYSON. 'Idylls of the King'—'Elaine.')
4. 'Whose welth was *wante*, whose plentie made him *poore*.'
(SPENSER. 'Faërie Queene,' I. iv. 29.)
5. 'And life is perfected by *Death*.'
E. B. BROWNING. 'A Vision of Poets,' End.)

6. Various 'contrasts,' more or less well chosen, have been sent. Two good ones are—

'Sweet tastes have sour closes;
And he repents on thorns that sleeps in beds of roses.'
(QUARLES' Emblems. Bk. i. 7.)

and—

'Sweetest things are sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.'
(SHAKESPERE. Sonnet 94.)

MARKS FOR APRIL.

60: A. C. R., *Blanchelys*, E. T., *Eleanor*, *Holly-Leaf*, *Irnham*, *Isabel*,
While Cat. 50: *Dorfchen*, *Double Dummy*, *Ethel Watkinson*, *Lenore*,
Syndicate. 40: *Athena*, *Malaprop*, *Mellon Mowbray*, *Nemo*, *Sea-Maiden*.
30: *Honeylands*, M. R. A.

The Blue Cat and *W. Adey* both posted their answers too late, and the former omitted to write 'Search Questions' on her envelope.

Holly-Leaf. No answers for March have been received from you.

Fourteen Streams is credited with 45 marks for March.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR JUNE.

('A sound of waters murmuring.')

1. 'A sound like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June.'
2. 'Over a ledge of granite
Into a granite bason the amber torrent descended . . .
Beautiful there for the colour derived from green rocks under;
Beautiful most of all, where beads of foam uprising
Mingle their clouds of white with the delicate hue of stillness . . .
Cliff over cliff for its sides, with rowan and pendant birch boughs.'
3. 'The brooklet came from the mountain,
As say the bards of old,
Running with feet of silver
Over the sands of gold.'
4. 'Oh! could I flow like thee and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme;
Though deep, yet clear; tho' gentle, yet not dull:
Strong without rage; without o'erflowing, full.'
5. 'The loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
But blind him to his native mountains more.'

6. Find another quotation on the same subject. (Marks according to merit.)

NOTICE.—Answers (to SEARCH QUESTIONS only) to be posted *before* the 25th of each month to *Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon*. 'Search Questions' to be written *outside* each envelope.

THIRD SHELF.

QUERIES.

Gamma would be much obliged if any one could tell her the author of the lines, and if they form part of a poem—

'They are not tasting death but taking rest
On the same holy couch where Jesus lay,
Soon to awake all glorified and blest
When the day breaks and shadows flee away.'

Mandalay asks for the reference—

'He must be humble who to heaven would go,
High is the roof there, but the gate is low.'

(*Mandalay* is thanked for kind words.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

'Love is a present for a mighty king,' may be part of a triad, but it is in George Herbert's Church porch—

'Scorn no man's love, though of a mean degree,
Love is a present for a mighty king,
Much less make any one thine enemy,
As guns destroy, so may a little thing.'

Arachne would further remark on the very interesting Nature Notes that she heard her first nightingale of the season on the 13th of April, his legitimate day for arriving. Arachne would like also to say something to autograph-hunters, who descend in shoals upon any unlucky author whose residence becomes known. The mere stiff copy of a name seems to Arachne utterly uninteresting and only desirable by those who love to count their collections, though a piece of a letter is characteristic enough to be worth having. But what she would say to those possessed with the rabies for autographs is that they impose a severe tax if they do not send stamps. One penny may be very well, but when demands come constantly it is enough to make one follow Lord Tennyson's example and never notice any!—ARACHNE.

BROAD-MINDEDNESS.

Here are *Ema* and *Daughter of the Soil* energetically opposing *Ruby*. The discussion is eternally interesting, and will never be concluded, because people use the term 'broad' in different senses. And it is always well to remember that our minds cannot possibly be as broad as the Truth itself.

'Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but *broken lights* of Thee,
And Thou, O God, art more than they.

There are always, at least, two sides to the shield.

April 13th.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—May I reply to 'Ruby' whose problem is, I think, common to many of us. *Too* broad-minded in a strict sense I do not think one can be—but would it be strict broad-minded behaviour if every one followed their own bent absolutely independent of every one else? Would it not rather be exceedingly narrow to be neither influenced, softened, nor strengthened by fellow-creatures. The point I think 'Ruby' misses is the frequent lack of that most excellent gift of charity, of that large give-and-take principle which makes people tremble to swallow one person's little personalities, because, though not absolutely wrong, they do not quite chime in with their own. It is hard to look on the world from many points of view, but it is nevertheless good. Surely we must be 'true to ourselves'; to attempt anything else is to fail miserably in life, and make oneself wretched; but to some of us at least, possessing strongly passionate natures, it has been given to feel those natures' burdens heavy to be borne—heavy at times beyond our strength. And if to this is added the scornful intolerance of other people, the school of life seems indeed a stern one, and it is touch and go if a nature so subjected will be ruined or purified by the fire—a prosaic and ordinary fire it may be, this of daily life, but a gnawing one it is too, and all the Christian virtues are needed to weather it well. We all know how highly ranks 'He that overcometh.'

By all means keep your own tastes and instincts. God gave them to you, but be careful they do not run away with you, examine them with open eyes, keep them well in hand. Here is the fine line where the fight and trouble begin. 'Do not try to be any one else—but—be the best of what you are, and this is a subtle work to accomplish and a lifelong labour, to know the difference between sticking steadfastly to your colours, and selfishness, conceit, blind egotism. It is an old story, looking for the best expression of one's life—we all want it, but most of us grope a long while in dark corners, before we begin to find.

I know but one answer to 'Ruby's' many problems, 'Faith alone can interpret life, and the heart that aches and bleeds with the stigma of pain, alone bears the likeness of Christ and can comprehend its dark enigma.'

As to the learning of dead languages, who without studying the past can understand the present?

This is the humble opinion, not untested, of

Yours very truly,

DAUGHTER OF THE SOIL.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—May I try, not to answer 'Ruby's' letter—her subject is too enormous and difficult for that—but to tell her, as she asks, how it strikes another mind.

I think the truth is that broad-mindedness (that is, I suppose, liberality and charity of ideas and thoughts) can *never* be carried too far as regards people, though it can, and often is, as regards the peculiar ideas and creeds of those same people. For instance, one is bound to be charitable and kindly to a Mormon or Atheist, not blaming him for what is perhaps only the fault of his education; but equally bound to disapprove *strongly* of his opinions. If there is a Right and Wrong at all in the world, if we are to make a choice between belief and unbelief, we, each one of us, must say 'I believe' as strongly, clearly, and decidedly as the amount of light given enables us to do in our several capacities—and such a saying involves necessarily disapproval of many of the tenets of others; *but*, we have no right whatever to blame them for holding those tenets, inasmuch as we do not know what opportunity they have had of learning better.

If by broad-mindedness a non-disapproval of others' ideas is meant, I think it is dangerous as leading to an indefiniteness and carelessness of belief, and it is, besides, illogical, as practically a line *must* be drawn some-

where, that somewhere then becoming a mere matter of personal opinion. 'Natural,' *i.e.*, God-given, instinct can never lead astray; the difficulty is that in scarcely any one is the instinct uncontaminated. Like an untrue compass, it cannot be trusted, and must be continually tested by a fixed rule.

'One's own reason' is also only too fallible. Witness again Mormons or cannibals, who would say that they followed it; and a line, differing probably for each person, must be drawn between the opposite extremes of entire dependence on others and too great self-reliance.

If we all went our own way, the inference would be that it is wrong, or at least a pity, to convert the heathen, or endeavour to teach the poor in great cities.

Non-interference, *carried too far*, amounts, I think, to a form of laziness and selfishness, a refusal to use the influence which every person in the world, in a more or less strong degree, possesses; and we *are* 'our brother's keeper.' Again, a middle course, between indifference and meddlesomeness, is to be found by Charity, and must be tried for.

There is, I know, a strong temptation to wish to be thought 'broad,' and to despise others as 'narrow'—to think that a fixed rule and loyal adherence to authority is inferior to a large-minded impression that all may be more or less right in their beliefs.

We do so hate being mentally kept within bounds.

Yet, though we are strictly forbidden to judge others, it is at least equally dangerous either to stray *wilfully* beyond the 'strait and narrow way' of belief ourselves, or by our 'broad-mindedness,' and toleration of error, to lead them to think that they may do so with impunity.

Yours sincerely,
'EMA.'

NATURE NOTES.

Blackheath, Kent, April 1st.—Saw several Frogs. Their black-spotted, yellow skins looked as though newly painted and varnished.

April 3rd.—Horse Chestnut leaves first out. Dug up *Fulus pulchellus*, a pretty little snake millipede with white head and antennæ, flesh-coloured body with a row of crimson spots down each side. It crawls along as though its numerous legs were bristles moved by vibration, and keeps twisting itself into the figure 6.

April 4th.—Ivy-leaved Speedwell (*Veronica hederefolia*) first out. Found Roseleaf-roller Caterpillar (*Argyroloza Bergmanniana*) and the larva of the Brown Cloak Moth (*Spilonota aquana*), both on red rose-tree. Picked up from the ground the Looper Caterpillar (*Abraxis grossulariata*).

April 5th.—Saw two Thrushes' nests in a garden. One, in some ivy, had four eggs in it; the bird began laying on the 2nd of April.

April 6th.—Walking before breakfast, watched Jackdaws flying between elm-trees in field and Kidbrook Church, they broke twigs off the trees and kept carrying them inside the steeple, then flew quickly back to the trees, crying 'Chough!' in a staccato voice.

April 9th.—Red Dead Nettle (*Lamium purpureum*) in flower.

April 10th.—Looked out of window of a house in Blackheath Park and saw Sparrows sitting on their eggs; they have built their nests between the laths of outside shutters. In the potting-shed near the same house saw a robin sitting on its nest, which it has built on the top of a bundle of raffia on a shelf. Until the bird was discovered the door was always kept locked, so it is a mystery how it got in and out to build its nest.

April 12th.—Small White Butterfly (*Pontia Rapæ*) and the Hawkfly (*Scæva Pyrastri*) flying in our garden.

April 13th.—In a garden at Lee saw a Blackbird's nest made chiefly of newspaper; also a Robin's nest on the ground, under an arch composed of three bricks built on purpose for it.

April 17th.—Found larva of Winter Moth (*Cheimatobia brumata*) and the larva of the Rosefly (*Hyppetra continua*) both on a tea-rose bush. Dug up larva of Cabbage Moth (*Mamestra brassicae*); also noticed on the bulb of narcissus three green insects, shaped like wood-lice, but only a third of the size—cannot find out the name of them. Watched common Humble Bee trying to climb up a bank of freshly turned earth; as it clung to the small clods of earth its weight made them turn over on to the top of it. I lifted it on to a hyacinth at last, when it flew away. Saw another Humble Bee with its tail ending in bright orange instead of greyish-yellow. Saw a small spider with pea-green body ending in a crimson tip and with a crimson head; as it sat on a wallflower it looked like a jewel. Found eleven spot Lady-bird. Saw a Sun-beetle golden-green. Dug up a rotten wooden paling and disturbed a colony of black ants; they rushed in all directions carrying their larvæ—these last were almost ready to turn into the perfect insect, through the transparent white skin the black speck of the future ant could be seen. Found a very small bee with curved horns amongst the rotten wood. When I picked it up it seemed quite torpid, and let me examine it with my lens without moving. When it began to crawl I put it in the flower border. Afterwards I found out its name—*Osmia bicornis*.

April 19th.—Saw two great White Cabbage Butterflies in the garden (*Pontia Brassicae*).

The rest of the Nature Notes are at Woldingham, Surrey.

Found Edible Snail (*Helix pomatia*); these large snails are common about here. Saw tuberous moschatel (*Adoxa*), wood-strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*), wood-spurge (*Euphorbia, amygdaloides*), Dog's mercury (*mercurialis perennis*), and ground-ivy, all in flower, besides the Goat Willow and White Willow. Heard the cuckoo, saw bullfinches and yellowhammers.

April 20th.—Found Bluebells in flower, Greater Stitchwort (*Stellaria holostea*), Mouse-ear Hawkweed (*hieracium pilosella*), Wood Crowfoot (*Ranunculus auricomus*), German Speedwell (*Veronica chamædrys*) and *V. buxbaumii*, Spurge Laurel (*Daphne Laureola*), Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*), Cuckoo Flower (*Cardamine pratensis*), Field Wood-rush (*Luzula campestris*), all flowering in the woods and lanes. Saw Rabbits, a Plover, and a Hawk. Saw large Brimstone Butterfly (*Gonepteryx Rhamni*). Cut open an oakapple and found a fat maggot, the larva of a gall-fly. Watched a Mason Bee fly into a hole of the bank of a wood; with its hind legs it filled up the opening with earth; I scraped away the earth with a twig, when the bee put its head out making an angry noise; it again filled up the opening, and when disturbed again flew out and away. About half-past ten in the evening heard the Nightingale.

April 21st.—Picked Cowslips. Several different snails are out enjoying the wet; amongst others the banded and lemon snails.

April 22nd.—Found on a hillside the Hairy Violet (*Viola hirta*), Verna Whitlow-grass (*Draba verna*), Early Field Scorpion-grass (*Myosotis Collina*), Musk Stork's-bill (*Erodium moschatum*), and in a pond Water Crowfoot (*Ranunculus aquatilis*), the Water Scorpion and the common Gerris. Found several beetles on hedge bank with heart-shaped thorax, oblong head, and antennæ resembling *Pristonychus terricola* so far, and in colour, but with broader body and very broad tips to legs. Flushed a pair of Partridges. Saw hen Goldfinch. Have just been looking at the common Watchman Beetle burrowing into a bank of loam, the underneath of its body was covered with pale yellow lice.—WINIFRED SPURLING.

Cheadle, Staffordshire, March 24th. — The Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*) is beginning to perfect his song—'Little bit o' bread and no cheese.'

March 26th.—Dandelion (*Leontodon taraxacum*) in flower. On limestone rocks and barren ground the leaves of this plant become far more deeply toothed, almost forming a distinct variety from the dandelion of our meadows. Yew (*Taxus baccata*) in flower. A very severe frost brought the Lapwings (*Vanellus cristatus*) on the lawns, close to the house, in search of food.

March 27th.—A Squirrel ran across the lawn, although the weather is still bitterly cold, showing that these little animals only partially hibernate and do not really become dormant.

March 30th.—Frost gone, and many Long-eared Bats (*Plecotus auritus*) flying around the Sallow bushes, picking off the moths feeding on the bloom, chiefly those of the following species: The Hebrew Character Moth (*Taniocampa gothica*), the Common Quaker (*T. stabilis*), and the Chestnut Moth (*Cerastis vaccinii*).

March 31st.—Found the first specimen of the March Moth (*Anisopteryx æscularia*) crawling up a branch of a Mountain Ash, or Rowan-tree. This is one of our earliest moths to appear in the spring, and the larva feeds on the Elm, Lime, Blackthorn, &c.

April 1st.—Tadpoles of the Frog swarming in a small pond, and feeding on decaying animal and vegetable matter, thus performing their useful scavenging work.

April 2nd.—First Humble Bee (*Bombus terrestris*) at Sallow bloom, and the Dor Beetle (*Geotrupes stercorarius*) 'wheeling his droning flight' at dusk.

April 3rd.—Dog Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*), Golden Saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*), and the common Butter Bur (*Petasites vulgaris*), all in flower, and Sweet Cicely (*Myrrhis odorata*) and Heart-leaved Valerian (*Valeriana pyrenaica*) springing up.

April 5th.—Field Mice (*Mus sylvatica*) have taken a whole row of peas just as they were sprouting. The row of peas should have been sprinkled with paraffin oil to keep off these little marauders.

April 11th.—The seeds of the Sycamore-tree (*Acer pseudo-platanum*) are springing up in hundreds around the parent trees, and there seems to be no bird or insect which feeds upon these seeds to keep the increase of this tree within due bounds.

April 15th.—The beautifully coloured females of *Andrena rufa*, one of our burrowing wild bees, flying about the gooseberry bloom followed by their little enemies, the Nomadæ, which are a family of parasitic wild bees seeking to lay their eggs in the nests of the *Adrena*, and so to cause the destruction of the family of their host.

April 16th.—The Field Hairy Rush (*Luzula campestris*) in flower. Song of the Chiff-Chaff (*Sylvia rufa*) first heard.

April 17th.—The shrill little squeak of the Shrew (*Sorex vulgaris*) heard in the hedgerows. A Herald Moth (*Gonoptera libatrix*) was brought to me which was found hibernating in a house, as is the habit of this moth, and so closely does the colouring of its wings harmonise with the brick wall upon which it takes up its abode for the winter, that it is often most difficult to be seen.

April 19th.—Willow Wren (*Sylvia trochilus*) and Tree Pipit (*Anthus arboreus*) first seen.

April 23rd.—A young Rook, which had fallen out of its nest and been killed, was soon discovered by our useful scavenging beetles (*Necrophorus mortuorum*) and is already partly buried by them, and another day or two will no doubt complete the work.

N.B.—Kindly correct a slip of the pen in my Nature Notes in last month's MONTHLY PACKET, where 'Catkins' of the Hazel were, in error, referred to as the *female* instead of the *male* flowers.—ENOTS.

Nature Notes sent also by *Speranza*, *Miranda*, and *Skylark*.

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

INDIA : DELHI.

QUESTIONS FOR JUNE.

11. Give some account of our Missions in Delhi, previously to the founding of the See of Lahore.

12. What do you know of the history of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi?

Books recommended :—*Digest of S. P. G. Records ; Under His Banner ; Delhi in Historical Sketches* (S. P. G.).

Answers to be sent to Bog Oak, Industrial School, Andover, by July 1st.

CLASS LIST FOR MARCH.

CLASS I.

M. P., 20 ; Ierne, 19 ; Anskar, 17 ; Veritas, 16 ; South Downs, 15.

CLASS II.

Constans et Fidelis, 14 ; Primrose, 13 ; C. W., 12.

REMARKS.

5. The Pioneers of Christianity in India are well done and all give the Christians of St. Thomas, the Portuguese, and St. Francis Xavier, and the Danish Lutheran Missions. Very few mention the Mission of Paulænus, 'the Sicilian Bee' (more certain than St. Thomas). He was head of the Catechetical School of Alexandria, about A.D. 130. He returned with accounts of the converts of St. Bartholomew and St. Thomas, and with a Hebrew copy of St. Matthew. A few mention King Alfred's Mission to India, specially interesting in view of the approaching 1,000th anniversary. C. W. Xavier's work was in the sixteenth not the fifteenth century.

6. It is curious that Bishops James and Turner of Calcutta are better remembered at the Cape than in India. The former, on his way out, held probably the first Confirmation in Cape Town, and consecrated the site of the present cathedral. The latter also did good work there on *his* way out in 1829. Nevertheless, the Cape was never included in Calcutta Diocese. *South Downs* omits Bishop Daniel Wilson, who for three years was Bishop of undivided India.

Prize for July to December, 1898, awarded to Miss Beresford-Knox (Ierne), Northland House, Crawley, Sussex. *England's Mission to India*, Bp. Barry (S.P.C.K.); and *Hinduism*, by Monier Williams (S.P.C.K.).
